Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-89-056
Friday
24 March 1989

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-89-056 *24 March 1989*

CONTENTS

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

24 Mar Middle East and South Asia Review 1

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Islamic Affairs

Iraqi Foreign Minister's Address to ICO 15 Mar *[INA]* 2

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Comments on PLO-U.S. Dialogue in Tunis 4
Calls Talks 'Positive' *[INA]* 4
U.S. 'Concern' Evaluated *[KUNA]* 5
U.S. 'Favors' Conference *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 5
No Request on Ending 'Uprising' *[Tunis Radio]* 5
Abu Sharif Discusses Dialogue With U.S. *[Algiers VOP]* 6
'Arafat Reaffirms Support for 'Uprising' *[WAKH]* 6
Hizballah Cables Support for PFLP-GC *[Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio]* 6
Nabulus Leaders Warned on Meetings With Israelis *[Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD 22 Mar]* 7

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Farmers Demonstrate for Return of Land *[Paris International]* 8
Air Force Chief Departs for USSR Visit *[APS]* 8

Egypt

Mubarak, King Husayn, Yasir 'Arafat To Meet *[MENA]* 8
Israel's Weizman Willing To Meet With 'Arafat *[MENA]* 8
Weizman Leaves Cairo *[MENA]* 9
Shamir Refusal To Meet With PLO Criticized *[MENA]* 9
Premier Returns From Morocco With Message *[MENA]* 9
Butrus Ghali Leaves for African Tour 21 Mar *[Cairo Radio]* 9
Butrus Ghali Views Ties With Sudan, Ethiopia *[MENA]* 9
Government To 'Freeze' Issue of POW's in Iran *[AL-WAFD 21 Mar]* 10
Kuwait To Receive Automated Rocket System *[AL-AKHBAR 22 Mar]* 10
UN Official Arrives for Africa Disarmament Talks *[MENA]* 10
'Abd al-Majid Addresses Forum *[MENA]* 10
Nigerian Defense Minister Arrives 20 Mar *[MENA]* 11
Holds 'Military Talks' *[MENA]* 11
Departs After 6-Day Visit *[MENA]* 11
Cairo Radio Cites IMF Policy on Debts 11
EEC Offers Credit Facilities, Grants *[AL-AHRAM 20 Mar]* 11

Libya

JANA Editor on 'Terrorist Incidents' 11
Foreign Liaison Bureau Statement on Race Issue *[JANA]* 12

Morocco

Joint Committee With Egypt Continues Meetings 13
Hassan Meets With Sidqi *[Cairo Radio]* 13
Investment Society Created *[MAP]* 13
Joint Communique Issued *[MENA]* 13
Economic Accords Detailed *[Rabat Radio]* 14

Sudan

Al-Ummah Party Agrees To Form New Government *[MENA]* 15
Interior Minister Views 'Exercise in Democracy' *[London AL-MAJALLAH 15-21 Mar]* 15
Government 'Awaits' Rebel Reply to Cease-Fire *[SUNA]* 16
Minister Denies Libyan-Rebel Forces Clash *[Omdurman Radio]* 16
Rebels Not Notified of Peace Plan Acceptance *[Radio SPLA]* 16
Armed Forces Confront Rebels Around Juba *[Khartoum Radio]* 17

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Envoy to Syria Denies Delivering Lebanese Message *[KUNA]* 18
Thai Official Delivers Message to Prime Minister *[KUNA]* 18
New Investment Plan To Benefit Expatriates *[ARAB TIMES 22 Mar]* 18
Businessmen Debate Effects of New Labor Law *[ARAB TIMES 22 Mar]* 19

PDRY

Defense Minister Seeks Syrian Expertise *[Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD 22 Mar]* 20

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd To Pay Official Visit to Baghdad 25 Mar *[SPA]* 20

Yemen Arab Republic

Joint North-South Ministerial Meetings Held 20
'Press Statement' on 1st Session *[Sanaa Radio]* 20
4th Meeting Closes *[Aden Radio]* 21

IRAQ

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd To Visit 25 Mar *[INA]* 22
Tariq 'Aziz Receives Lebanon's Abu Jamrah *[Baghdad Radio]* 22
Malaysian Foreign Minister Pays Visit 22
Meets With Saddam Husayn *[INA]* 22
Holds Talks With Hammadi *[INA]* 22
Discusses Trade With Minister *[INA]* 22

ISRAEL

Shamir on U.S. Trip, Ties With Jordan, Egypt *[MA'ARIV 24 Mar]* 23
Peres on Palestinian State, Intelligence Report *[Tel Aviv TV]* 24
Peres to Party: Challenge Now or Wait for 1992 *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
'Different Message' Found in Intelligence Report *[THE NATION 24 Mar]* 27
Mosad Report Viewed as 'Less Unequivocal' *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 24 Mar]* 28
Likud, Alignment Agree on Settlement Budget *[THE JERUSALEM POST 24 Mar]* 28
SLA Denies 'Awn Request To Shell Junblatt *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
100,000 Lebanese Christians Reported Fleeing *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Nigerian Official's 'Secret Visit' Presages Ties *[THE JERUSALEM POST 24 Mar]* 29
Arens Tells Knesset PLO Stepping Up Violence *[THE NATION 24 Mar]* 29

PFLP Activists Threaten Nabulus Figures *[THE JERUSALEM POST 24 Mar]* 29
Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories 30
1 Killed by Explosive Charge *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Firebomb Thrown Near Nazareth *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
12 Injured in 23 Mar Incidents *[THE JERUSALEM POST 24 Mar]* 30
Tulkarm Youth Dies of Wounds *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
AL-SHA'B Editor Sentenced *[AL-SHA'B 23 Mar]* 30

JORDAN

Al-Rifa'i on Suspension of UK Aircraft Sale *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 31
Paper Says U.S. Out To 'Liquidate' 'Uprising' *[AL-RA'Y 24 Mar]* 31
King Husayn Telephones YAR's 'Adballah Salih *[Amman Radio]* 31

LEBANON

Satellites Reportedly Monitor Hostage Movements
[AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI 13-19 Mar] 32
'Religious Official' To Intervene for Hostages *[AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI 13-19 Mar]* 32
Islamic Group Reportedly Has Stinger Missiles *[AL-SHIRA' 27 Mar]* 32
Nine U.S. Officers Withdraw From Al-Yarzah *[VOM]* 32
RFL on Departure 32
Clashes Between Army, Occupation Forces Continue 32
Beirut Area 'Temporarily' Closed *[VOM]* 32
'Violent Clashes' on Combat Lines *[RFL]* 32
VOL Updates Casualties 32
Clashes 'Rage' in Mountain Area *[Beirut Radio]* 33
Explosions Reported in W. Beirut *[RFL]* 33
Shells Fall Near Sinn al-Fil *[RFL]* 33
VOL Updates Security Situation 33
Reportage on Activity of South Lebanese Army 33
Resistance Attacks Patrol *[Voice of National Resistance]* 33
2 Resistance Members Killed *[VOM]* 33
Unit Invades Shab'a Village *[VOM]* 33
Hizballah Palestinians Killed *[VOL]* 34
'Awn Holds News Conference, Criticizes Syria *[VOL]* 34
No Accord at 'Syrian Gunpoint' *[VOL]* 35
'Awn Sends Message to Al-Asad, Urges Withdrawal *[RFL]* 35
'Nationalist' Parties Opt for Mobilization *[VOM]* 35
Criticize Arab League *[VOM]* 35

SYRIA

Radio Commentary Reiterates Stand on Lebanon *[Damascus Radio]* 37
Polish Defense Minister, Delegation Depart *[SANA]* 37
Foreign Minister Returns From France Visit *[Damascus Radio]* 38
Prime Minister Chairs Meeting on Oil Affairs *[Damascus Radio]* 38

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Kabul-Mujahidin Fighting in Provinces, Kabul 39
Rebels Cut Off Roads to Kabul *[Islamabad Radio]* 39
Attacks on Jalalabad Continue *[Kabul Radio]* 39
48 Rebels Killed in Sarowbi *[Kabul Radio]* 39
Rebels Change Jalalabad Strategy *[AFP]* 40
Helicopter Downed in Jalalabad *[Islamabad Radio]* 40
Mujahidin Capture Golran *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Wakil: 'Dailogues for Peace' With U.S. Sought *[Kabul Radio]* 41
Spokesman Urges U.S. To 'Take the Lead' in Peace *[Kabul Radio]* 41

Meli Shura Message on Political Situation *[Kabul Radio]* 42
UN Notified of Pakistani 'Violations' 335-338 *[BAKHTAR]* 42
THE MUSLIM Interviews Najibullah in Kabul *[Islamabad, 12 Mar]* 43

India

Indo-Nepal Trade, Transit Treaty Expires 23 Mar *[Delhi Radio]* 44
Call for Negotiations Unanswered *[Delhi Radio]* 44
Nepalese Foreign Minister Cited *[AFP]* 45
Commentary on Nepal 'Priviliges' *[Delhi International]* 45
Food, Medical Supplies Sent to Afghanistan *[Delhi Radio]* 46
Sri Lanka's Perumal Wants PKF To Remain *[Delhi Radio]* 46
Warns of 'Bloodbath' *[AFP]* 47
Assam Parties Discuss Peace, Pass Resolution *[Delhi Radio]* 48

Iran

Majlis Speaker Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon *[Tehran Radio]* 48
Khomeyni Message Seen as Attack on Montazeri *[Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio]* 48
Mohtashemi Says World Powers 'Humiliated' *[IRNA]* 49
French Foreign Ministry on Khomeyni's Remarks *[AFP]* 49
Official on Possible Restrictions on FRG Imports *[TEHRAN TIMES 18 Mar]* 49
Ambassador to Greece Examines Ties With EC *[TEHRAN TIMES 18 Mar]* 50
Khamene'i Continues Visit to Khorasan Province *[Tehran Radio]* 50
Majlis Deputy From Kerman Dies in Car Accident *[IRNA]* 51
Commentary on Students Expelled From UK *[Tehran International]* 51
TEHRAN TIMES Decries Halabjah Bombing *[18 Mar]* 51
Paper Deplores 'Uncooperative' Cooperatives *[ETTELA'AT 16 Mar]* 52

Pakistan

Prime Minister Bhutto Addresses Nation 23 Mar *[Islamabad Radio]* 52
Further on President's National Day Address *[Islamabad Radio]* 55
Bhutto Hosts Luncheon for Punjab Chief Minister *[Islamabad Radio]* 55
Bahraini Information Minister Meets Bhutto *[WAKH]* 56
U.S. Third World Debt Relief Plans Reviewed *[THE MUSLIM 16 Mar]* 56

Sri Lanka

Cuban Official Arrives for 3-Day Visit *[LANKAPUVATH]* 56
Wijeratne Says JVP Militants Seek 'Surrender' *[AFP]* 56
'Vigilante' Group Blamed for Deaths of 4 Rebels *[AFP]* 57
Tamil Tigers Allege New Indian Offensive *[AFP]* 58
Indian Forces Kill 6 'Terrorists' in North *[LANKAPUVATH]* 58
6 'Subversives' Killed, 18 Rounded Up *[LANKAPUVATH]* 58

24 Mar Middle East and South Asia Review
LD2403134589

NOTICE: FBIS wishes to advise that resource constraints will compel discontinuation of the Middle East and South Asia Review effective 1 April.

[Editorial Report]

PLO-U.S. Dialogue

It is now "imperative" to convene an Arab summit to discuss Arab issues, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat stated at a press conference reported by Tunis radio. In remarks reported by INA, he described the first round of talks in Tunis with the United States as "positive and serious," and declared that the "official dialogue" is evidence of the new U.S. Administration's concern which Israel is trying to discourage.

Israel

Israel should talk with 'Arafat in order to know "exactly what he wants," declared Science Minister 'Ezer Weizmann in remarks reported by MENA. Israelis "should learn" that if they want peace in the Middle East they should "work on a solution to the Palestinian problem" and this can only be accomplished by negotiating with 'Arafat, he noted. Weizmann went on to state that withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza is also "necessary and inevitable."

In the territories, a military court in Lod sentenced four members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to life imprisonment for attempting to infiltrate Israel last summer, Jerusalem radio reported. A Gaza resident also received life imprisonment for stabbing three guards at Gaza prison, Tel Aviv's IDF radio reported.

In a separate development, El Al and the Polish airline LOT signed a protocol 23 March on direct flights between the two countries to begin 27 March, according to Jerusalem radio.
Lebanon

Fierce fighting resumed 23 March along the "traditional" combat lines in Beirut, the Voice of Lebanon radio reported. Syrian troops placed rocket launchers and a field gun in an empty lot in al-Hamra' and two other rocket launchers in the west Beirut area, the radio added citing security sources. Six people were killed and nine others injured in intermittent shelling in other areas of the city.

An unidentified Islamic group in Lebanon has reportedly bought two U.S.-made Stinger missiles from a "foreign embassy" in Beirut, according to the AL-SHIRA' weekly cited by AFP. The weekly added that the group is trying to smuggle the missiles out of Lebanon.

Syria

Soviet Defense Minister Dmitriy Yazov is to visit Syria 27 March at the invitation of his Syrian counterpart, Damascus radio reported.

Libya

Libya "strongly condemns" terrorism and has no relations with any terrorist groups or organizations, declared JANA's political affairs editor in the wake of media reports linking Libya with "certain terrorist incidents." Furthermore, Libya is "prepared to cooperate" with the international community to combat terrorist attacks, the editor added.

Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi recently sent a message to John Garang, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), affirming his acceptance of the peace agreement between the SPLM and the Democratic Unionist Party and calling for a meeting between himself and Garang this month, SUNA reported. However, an SPLM spokesman dismissed the claim that Al-Mahdi had notified the movement of his government's acceptance of the peace plan as "clumsy and hasty propaganda quite remote from reality," because that government had not yet been formed, the spokesman added according to the clandestine SPLA radio.

Afghanistan

Soviet Warning—Any attempts to "encroach" on the safety of personnel in the Soviet Embassy in Kabul will draw "a most resolute Soviet response," Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze warned in an interview with TASS on the situation in Afghanistan. He noted that the opposition are trying to compensate for their military failures by "barbarous" actions such as the shelling of Kabul Airport which the USSR uses to deliver "humanitarian aid" to the Afghan people.

In a related development, USSR Deputy Defense Minister General Varennikov announced in an interview with NOVOYE VREMYA magazine that the USSR has decided to recall all its "advisory personnel" who are outside of Kabul, Moscow radio reported.

Political/Military Situation—Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil called for talks with the United States to "help end the destructive war which is "damaging U.S. credibility and prestige," Kabul radio reported. A Foreign Ministry statement issued 22 March appealed to the United States to "return its diplomats" to Kabul and thus play a "major role" in efforts to end foreign interference in the country's affairs, according to the radio.

As for the continuing battle for Jalalabad, the mujahidin have "changed strategy" and will now "hold on" to captured positions instead of destroying them and moving on, a mujahdin commander said in remarks reported by AFP. He disclosed that no government supply helicopters have been able to land at Jalalabad Airport for 2 days and that 10 mujahidin tanks are occupying the runway. Government troops hold only the terminal building and the main gate, he said.

Islamic Affairs

Iraqi Foreign Minister's Address to ICO 15 Mar

JN1503194089 Baghdad INA in English 1740 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, Mar. 15, INA—Mr. Tariq 'Aziz, deputy premier and foreign minister called upon the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to take the initiative of supporting the efforts aimed at achieving an immediate, complete and comprehensive exchange of Iraqi and Iranian prisoners of war (POW's) in accordance with the rules of the tolerant Islamic shari'a and provisions of international law pertaining to this problem.

Addressing the 18th conference of the OIC foreign ministers here today, Mr. 'Aziz said "This should not be linked to the process of the political negotiations and any attempt to turn the POW's issue into a political card to be exploited for pressure and blackmail must be catgegorically rejected. [quotation marks as received]

Mr. 'Aziz added that when the Iran-Iraq war erupted, the Islamic world and the Organization of Islamic Conference in particular were the first to exert sincere efforts to stop it and extinguish its flames. The emergency meeting of the OIC foreign ministers on 26th September, 1980 in New York was the first step to be taken along the road of peaceful mediation, a step which we immediately welcomed. Then we had the Mecca-Al-Taif summit conference as another attempt made on the highest level of Islamic leadership to put an end to the war. Further attempts were made, with resolutions adopted by the OIC summits in Casablanca and Kuwait, as well as by the ministerial conferences of our organization, to put an end to the bloodshed. The Islamic peace committee, which was set up at the Al-Taif summit, exerted incessant efforts in order to end the war.

Mr. 'Aziz went on saying that Islamic and international efforts, however, failed to achieve any result. The war continued for eight long and bloody years, resulting in gigantic losses in life and property. The reason for this failure is well known to the whole world and to the Islamic world in particular. It was Iran's insistence upon the continuation of the war and its rejection of all international and Islamic resolutions and initiatives.

On 8th August, 1988, an agreement was reached through the mediation of the United Nations secretary-general, upon a ceasefire and the entry into direct negotiations between the two parties with a view to reaching a common understanding of the provisions of Resolution 598 and of the timings and procedures required for its implementation. Thus, the ceasefire came into effect as of 20th August, 1988.

On 25 August, the process of negotiations started and has continued for seven months now without any tangible results being achieved towards the establishment of a comprehensive and lasting peace.

The Iraqi foreign minister pointed out that Security Council Resolution 598 is a peace plan aimed at leading the two parties to a comprehensive and lasting peace based on the principles and the U.N. charter and international law governing international relations. The achievement of this objective runs counter to the Iranian attempts aimed at turning the military conflict into a political conflict and making Resolution 598 and arena for such a conflict. It is also contrary to the selective approach that Iran had adopted towards the resolution by concentrating on one point in the provisions of Resolution 598 and avoiding the mutual obligations stipulated in the other provisions of the resolution. This policy can never constitute a real beginning ensuring a comprehensive, balanced and lasting peace. The right approach is that of understanding which can only be ensured through really direct negotiations.

Mr. 'Aziz further said the policy of polemics, propaganda campaigns, the evasion of direct dialogue and of pursuing a selected approach can never serve any positive purpose. It will in no way lead to the implementation of the resolution as a peace plan. Now, seven months after the ceasefire, it is imperative that we work clearly and without manoeuvering on the consolidation and confirmation of the ceasefire by agreeing on all its provisions and on the mutual obligations of the two parties. This will be the first step that will place the process of the negotiations on sound grounds and ensure the prospects of its success. It is also imperative that we abide by the agreement of 8 August, 1988 and by the policy of real and serious direct negotiations with a view to reaching such balanced agreements as would achieve the mutual benefits of the two parties and lay down the basis for a comprehensive and lasting peace.

Mr. 'Aziz added that Iraq, the country that believes in peace, has called for its establishment and given great sacrifices in order to make peace possible, and remains committed to its principled stand. Iraq will continue to work sincerely and tirelessly for the achievement of a comprehensive and lasting peace with Iran and in the region at large.

Mr. 'Aziz said that the continuation of the tragedy of the Iran-Iraq POW's has led us to propose its inscription as a separate item on our agenda. Iraq's proposal stems from our belief in the role the Organization of the Islamic Conference can play in this respect. The rules of the Islamic shari'a stipulate the humane treatment of POW's as a duty, kindness to them as a religious virtue, and demand that they be respected, protected from harm in time of war and duly released once the war is over. This is also the position of international law.

The third paragraph of Security Council Resolution 598, which has been accepted by both Iraq and Iran, urges that POW's be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention of 1949, relative to the treatment of prisoners of war. Article 118 of the said convention stipulates that POW's shall be released and

repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities, which have effectively ceased since the cease-fire came into force on 20 Agusut, 1988.

The Iraqi foreign minister added that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) addressed, on 4 October 1988, a note to the foreign ministries of both Iraq and Iran in which the ICRC called upon the two parties to begin an immediate exchange of their POW's in accordance with Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. Iraq accepted this proposal while Iran rejected it claiming that active military hostilities had not yet ceased. When we proposed to the Iranian side that we should seek the chairman of the ICRC's arbitration on the interpretation of Article 118 of the convention, the Iranians refused that proposal too.

Iraq also accepted the proposal submitted by the ICRC that ICRC registered sick and wounded POW's, totalling 1158 Iraqis and 411 Iranians, be released on a reciprocal and proportional basis. The Iranian side, however, has not fully abided by that agreement, and has resorted to playing around with the numbers of the POW's covered by the repatriation. Then the Iranians retracted from the implementation of the said agreement, which has meant that the sick and wounded POW's remain in their camps of captivity on both sides.

Mr. 'Aziz pointed out that once again, Iraq took the initiative in releasing a further 255 Iranian sick and wounded POW's, on 23-24 November, in response to an appeal made by the second conference of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs which was then being held in Baghdad.

Mr. 'Aziz said that on 5 March 1989, the president of the Republic of Iraq announced that Iraq was prepared, for humanitarian and legal considerations, to conduct an immediate and total exchange of POW's, regardless of the outcome of the peace negotiations between Iraq and Iran or of the degree of progress achieved towards a comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of Security Council Resolution 598 and the ceasefire agreement of 8 August 1988. President Husayn stressed a fundamental aspect in this matter. He stated that if there is any concern as to the possibility of the repatriated POW's being re-drafted into the service giving an added weight to their respective armies which may tilt the balance in the negotiations either way, such a concern may be met through a mutual undertaking, guaranteed by the United Nations, their repatriated POW's shall not be returned to services until such time as peace is established in a complete and lasting manner between Iraq and Iran.

Referring to the Palestine issue, Mr. 'Aziz said the Palestinian question has always been in the forefront of the issues for which Iraq has tirelessly fought. In spite of the hardships of eight years of war, Iraq has continued to support this just cause and stand by the Arab people of Palestine in their legitimate struggle.

This question has been historically linked to the destiny of Arabs and Muslims. It is now witnessing a critical juncture in its history, which makes imperative upon our organization the translation of the positions declared by the Islamic states on Palestine into a tangible reality.

The persistence of the intifada of the Arab people of Palestine throughout the past eighteen [as received] months has dispersed the illusions of the occupying usurpers and those who support them that repression and terrorism can in any way force a people into abandoning its right to freedom and independence. Furthermore, the continuation of this blessed uprising has unveiled before the whole world the real face of the entity of Zionist usurpers. The result has been that many of those who used to stand by the Israeli occupation have now abandoned their previous positions and are reviewing their policies towards the just cause of the Palestinian people who have been unjustly denied the exercise of their right to self-determination.

The Iraqi foreign minister added that the declaration of the Palestinian state during the Algiers meeting of the Palestinian National Council on 15 November, 1988 came as an expression of the aspirations of the Arab people of Palestine and of their determination to exercise their inalienable national rights under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

This declaration includes the free will of the Palestinian as recognized by the resolutions of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organization of African Unity and all other international fora. This significant development in the Palestinian question requires that the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Islamic states should exert, in an extraordinary manner, serious and tangible efforts in support of the Palestinian cause on the international level until the Arab people of Palestine have realized their legitimate objectives and established their free and independent state on their national soil.

On Israeli nuclear threats, the Iraqi foreign minister said the subject of the Israeli nuclear threats remains to constitute a danger to the security of the Arab and Islamic countries. In spite of the various decisions and resolutions adopted by the competent international bodies, first amongst which being those of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency, Israel presists in its rejection of these resolutions in the same way as it rejected Resolution 487 (1981) which had been unanimously adopted by the Security Council. Of course, Israel has also refused to accede to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

The announcement by Israel of the success of its first launch of a satellite diverted to military purposes marks the beginning of a new and dangerous stage in the escalation of these threats to the security and society of the region.

The Islamic countries are called upon to adopt a unified stand in the face of these threats, particularly as the threats come within the framework of the ongoing conspiratorial collaboration between the two racist regimes of Israel and South Africa in the field of nuclear armament.

Mr. 'Aziz added that the grave security situation, resulting from the introduction by Israel of nuclear weapons in the Middle East region, has radically undermined the balance of power therein. This situation constitutes a threaty to the national security of the region, which makes it incumbent upon the Islamic countries to take a unified position towards the measures of world disarmament. These measures must be balanced and fair and should not allow any particular country, or group of countries, to enjoy special privileges at any stage of the disarmament procedures. The measures should rather give top priority to nuclear disarmament as stated in the final declaration of the 1978 U.N. extraordinary session on disarmament as well as in the declarations on disarmament issued by the Non-Aligned Movement.

Referring to the Lebanese crisis, Mr. 'Aziz said Lebanon continues to live the severe tribulation it has been suffering for many years now as a result of the persistent Zionist aggression and of the intense foreign competition aimed at interfering in its internal affairs and violating its sovereignty and independence.

Our organization has adopted a number of resolutions, the most recent of which being resolution (S-17/5), vehemently condemning the Israeli enemy's occupation of Lebanese territory along with the repressive measures being exercised by the Israeli authorities there. Today our organization is called upon once again to extend its firm support to the efforts aimed at safeguarding Lebanon's national unity, respecting its legitimate authority and putting an end to the atrocious Israeli occupation along with all other forms of external interference.

Mr. 'Aziz pointed out that Iraq took the initiative of calling upon the Arab states to unify their efforts within the framework of the League of Arab States in order to resolve the Lebanese crisis. The committee of six has been formed and we hope that it will succeed in safeguarding unity amongst the Lebanese national forces and ending all forms of external interference and presence in Lebanon so that the brotherly people of Lebanon can exercise freedom and resume the reconstruction of the country that has been torn apart by sedition and foreign ambitions.

Mr. 'Aziz said "I should refer here to two important and positive developments that have occurred in the Arab region. The first is the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council, whose objective is to strengthen the ties of constructive and fruitful cooperation amongst its member-states, between the ACC and other Arab states and especially the existing Arab groupings, and between the ACC and the countries and international organizations of the world. The second development is to do with the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union which meets with our blessing felicitations. We look forward to seeing the three existing Arab groupings establish the fruitful cooperation that would strengthen the League of Arab States and augment Arab joint action."

On the situation in Afghanistan, Mr. 'Aziz said that one of the signs of detente which generates a feeling of optimism in the world has been the withdrawal of Soviet forces which we have witnessed in Afghanistan in accordance with the timing agreed upon in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations and announced by the Soviet Union more than a year ago. We look forward to seeing peace and stability restored to Afghanistan and the [as received] of Afghanistan allowed to exercise its right to self-determination and to the settlement of its internal problems through peaceful means and dialogue and without any external interference with a view to safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of the country and enabling it to play its natural and constructive role in the region. On the international economic situation, Mr. 'Aziz said that Iraq has always called for the expansion of the ties of cooperation amongst the Islamic countries, which are developing countries, so that they could face up to the inequitable economic threats existing between the developed and developing countries. Iraq has also called for the establishment of a new international economic order based upon just foundations.

The problems relating to international trade, to the increasing foreign debt burdening the developing countries, to the deterioration in the prices of basic commodities, in addition to the difficult climate conditions and natural disasters suffered by these countries, have all contributed to the deterioration in the agricultural production and economic conditions of these countries, particularly those of the African Sahel, which have suffered the worst disasters of drought and desertification and an increasing series of locust waves during these recent years.

Mr. 'Aziz added that Iraq feels that it has a special responsibility towards this question in its capacity as chairman of the Committee of Solidarity with the Peoples of the African Sahel. Iraq calls upon the member-states to extend the economic assistance necessary to alleviate the severe economic suffering of these countries in accordance with the principles of Islamic brotherhood and integration.

Concluding, Mr. 'Aziz expressed Iraq's continued and genuine readiness to extend the cooperation required for the achievement of the objectives for which the Organization of the Islamic Conference came into being.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Comments on PLO-U.S. Dialogue in Tunis

Calls Talks 'Positive'

JN2303165489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Tunis, 23 Mar (INA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has called for convening an

urgent Arab summit conference to discuss Arab developments. 'Arafat said at a press conference held here at noon today that there are Arab efforts to convene a summit conference. He added that the venue of the summit conference will be Riyadh if it is ordinary and in one of the Arab countries if it is extraordinary. He added that Moroccan monarch King Hassan II agreed to host any extraordinary summit.

'Arafat denied his knowledge of reports repeated today that the PLO called for convening an Arab summit in Morocco.

Yasir 'Arafat said that he will hold contacts with Jordanian monarch King Husayn and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in the near future to discuss the developments in the Palestine question and the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

'Arafat expressed his satisfaction with the results of the first round of the official Palestinian-American dialogue held here yesterday. He added that the PLO has assessed this dialogue in a meeting held for this purpose. 'Arafat described the dialogue as positive and serious with regard to the issues that were discussed. However, he did not disclose these issues.

'Arafat said that the official dialogue between the PLO and America is evidence of the new U.S. Administration's concern for this dialogue, which Israel is trying to stop and discontinue. He added that the Palestinian leadership will hold another meeting later today to discuss the details of the dialogue and the American reactions to the Palestinian demands. He affirmed that the official dialogue and the unofficial meetings that preceded this dialogue is evidence of the success of the PLO and its policy.

'Arafat denied the reports that the U.S. Administration has asked the PLO to stop the popular intifadah [uprising] inside the occupied territory. He said that nobody can ask the Palestinians such a thing and the intifadah will continue and escalate.

On the PLO's stand with regard to the convening of an international peace conference, 'Arafat said that the PLO's stand stems from the stand and resolutions of the Arab summit conferences held in Casablanca, Amman, and Algiers as well as from the Palestine National Council resolutions. He added that all these resemble the stand of Europe, the USSR, and the nonaligned countries.

U.S. 'Concern' Evaluated

LD2303174189 Kuwait KUNA in English 1555 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Tunis, March 23 (KUNA)—PLO Chief Yasir 'Arafat Thursday described the second round of the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, conducted here last night, as "positive and serious" when taking into consideration intensity of major issues that were covered.

The Palestinian leader told a press conference here today the dialogue was a positive indicator to the new U.S. Administration's interest in such a process and securing its continuity.

He said that the PLO Executive Committee met here last night following his return from Baghdad and evaluated the U.S.-Palestinian talks which lasted nearly five hours.

He affirmed his organization's insistence on convocation of the U.N.-sponsored international conference on peace in the Mideast with presence of all concerned parties including the PLO and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

'Arafat said Wednesday's dialogue was the first formal PLO talks with the new Bush administration. On December 16 a round of talks was held in Tunis between the PLO and the U.S. ambassador here during the era of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

On issues discussed during the talks and whether there are specific American demands, the PLO chief said lots of major issues were covered, adding "I have no right to speak of what the U.S. side proposed or demanded concerning the peace process."

Yet, he said that were tackled during the talks shown a clear indication to the United States' concern to reach a just solution that suits all parties concerned in the Arab-Israeli conflict despite Israel's attempts to abort such a dialogue. [sentence as received]

U.S. 'Favors' Conference

JN2303185289 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat told a news conference in Tunis today that yesterday's round of dialogue was positive and serious and, in his words, testifies to a Palestinian and American desire to carry on with it. 'Arafat indicated that, in principle, Washington favors convening an international conference, but it wants the conference to be prepared with preliminary Palestinian-Israeli meetings. Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] said the U.S. Administration encourages holding contacts with Israelis. The Palestine National Council had decided to intensify contacts with all of the democratic, peaceful, and progressive forces in Israel, said 'Arafat.

No Request on Ending 'Uprising'

LD2303234989 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] At a news conference in Tunis this evening, Yasir 'Arafat said that the PLO Executive Committee will meet soon to debate the viewpoints put forward by the United States during the second round of dialogue with

the PLO. 'Arafat explained that the Palestinian leadership met and evaluated the results of the discussions at this round of dialogue. He added that he conveyed to the U.S. side the PLO's stand toward the international conference.

'Arafat confirmed that the United States did not ask for an end to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab territories because no one can ask a people to stop its resistance to occupation.

'Arafat observed that the current stage makes it imperative to speed up the convening of the Arab summit in an ordinary or an emergency session. He warned against the folly of the Zionist military preparations that are currently taking place within the framework of preparing for launching large attacks against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

Abu Sharif Discusses Dialogue With U.S.

LD2303192989 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Brother Bassam Abu Sharif, information adviser to the brother leader, Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], has stated that in the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue it has become necessary and important to concentrate on the ways and means to guarantee the continuation of efforts that will achieve a comprehensive peace, and also ensure that the United States will pressure the Zionist government into withdrawing from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In a statement he made to the press on the resumption of the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue, brother Abu Sharif added that the Palestinian decision is extremely clear—namely to continue the struggle against the Zionist occupation until the occupation is ended, no matter how much the madness of Zionist terrorism is intensified.

'Arafat Reaffirms Support for 'Uprising'

JN2403080689 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 24 Mar 89

[By Faruq Shukri]

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (WAKH)—PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has renewed the determination to maintain the popular intifadah [uprising] in the occupied territories until the occupiers are expelled and a Palestinian state is established.

In an interview on Baghdad television here tonight, he said the intifadah is a decision made by both the Palestinian leadership and the youngest Palestinian child in the alleys, neighborhoods, and streets of Gaza and the West Bank and is also the Palestinian people's revolutionary accumulation. 'Arafat, who concluded a brief visit to Iraq yesterday, emphasized that the intifadah will continue one wave after another with all resolve and willpower. He said: The stone-throwing revolution will only stop when the Israeli occupation is removed from the Palestinian soil. Yasir 'Arafat reiterated the Palestinian people's determination not to be a new victim, as was the case with the Yalta conference of 1947. He said: We have determined that international detente should not be against us this time.

The PLO Executive Committee chairman urged the Arab states to hold a summit conference as soon as possible. He said: The need to convene an Arab summit now is more than ever before to affirm the soundness of the approach that emerged following the declaration of the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union in addition to the Gulf Cooperation Council. 'Arafat described these councils as tributaries of strength for both the Arab nation and its unity. He said: The need to safeguard the Arab League and its continued activity is now greatar than ever before.

'Arafat sharply criticized the Europeran states for not recognizing the Palestinian state. He said the Western world, particularly the European states, should deal with all paragraphs of Resolution 181, which provides for establishing two states; they should not deal only with the paragraph on the Jewish state.

Concluding his remarks, Yasir 'Arafat affirmed the steadfastness of the Palestinian rifle in southern Lebanon. He said: Our wonderful steadfastness in southern Lebanon was a reply to the conspiracy to expel half a million Palestinians from Lebanon. It was also a new nourishment for the popular intifadah throughout the occupied Arab territories. He said the close Palestinian victory in the occupied territories will complement the victory achieved by the Iraqi soldier at the Arab nation's eastern gate following 8 years of fighting.

Hizballah Cables Support for PFLP-GC

JN2403122889 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1140 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Brother strugglers, we have received a cable from Hizballah on the Zionist raid on the positions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] in Al-Biqa'. It says: The barbaric Zionist aggression against the PFLP-GC's civil installations was just new evidence of the Zionist expansionist danger and the futility of all Arab retreats and attempts to coexist with this historical enemy. It is very regrettable that the Zionist attacks on the people of Palestine and their hero mujahidin are continuing at a time when some defeatist Palestinian leaders are making concession after concession with the aim of achieving the mirage of a peaceful solution that will be more vile and humiliating than the outcome of the ill-omened Camp David.

The Hizballah cable adds: While greatly appreciating the PFLP-GC's stand, which rejects all plans to settle the Muslim Palestinian people's cause peacefully, and while greeting the firm stand of brother Ahmad Jibril in the face of the Americans and Zionists, we stress our solidarity with him and with all the Palestinian mujahidin

for the sake of removing the Zionist entity from existence. We invoke the most sublime blessings on the martyrs of the front and the wounded mujahidin.

Nabulus Leaders Warned on Meetings With Israelis
JN2403093389 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 22 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that the houses of 10 Palestinian figures from the occupied town of Nabulus were simultaneously stormed recently time by persons claiming affiliation with the Fatah Movement and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. They threatened to kill these figures and set their houses ablaze should they hold dialogues with Israelis or meet with Europeans, including William Waldegrave, British minister of state at the Foreign Office.

Reliable sources in the occupied territories revealed to AL-ITTIHAD that these persons were carrying sharp tools and knives and asked some Nabulus personalities to pay 500 Jordanian dinars for the intifadah [uprising]. The sources said that among the 10 Nabulus figures whose houses were stormed were Sa'id Kan'an, Husam 'Abd al-Hadi, Ibrahim 'Abd al-Hadi, and Mazin al-Shak'ah. Palestinian sources accused the enemy intelligence services of carrying out these terrorist acts to strike at national unity.

Algeria

Farmers Demonstrate for Return of Land

LD2303214989 Paris International Service in French 1245 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpts] [Announcer] In Algeria yesterday farmers whose land was seized in 1971 demonstrated outside the People's National Assembly in Algiers asking for the return of their property. Here are the details from Claire Arsenaud-Lers in Algiers.

[Arsenaud-Lers] [passage omitted] Several dozen farmers from the main agricultural regions of the country assembled outside the parliament to demand the return of their land. The land was seized in 1971 at the time of the agrarian revolution. In 1987 the Algerian Government reversed that policy and decided, with the aim of boosting the mediocre performance of its agriculture, to redistribute land. Whereas the majority of allocations took place without problems, some 3,000 were challenged, requiring a committee of inquiry to be established. Thus, certain farmers who demonstrated outside the national assembly are former landowners who today have to rent their own lands from its recent beneficiaries at an often exorbitant price.

There have been similar demonstrations throughout most of Algeria in recent weeks. National People's Assembly Speaker Rabah Bitat, who received a delegation of the demonstrators yesterday, said that there is a proposal to draft a bill which would take into account the peasants' claims. However, the demonstrators do not intend to leave it at that. They plan another demonstration next Wednesday at the government headquarters this time.

Air Force Chief Departs for USSR Visit

LD2303123789 Algiers APS in English 1154 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Algiers, 23/3/89 (APS)—A military delegation led by General Abdelmalek Guenaizia commandant of the air forces, deputy head of staff left Algiers Thursday for a working visit in Moscow.

Egypt

Mubarak, King Husayn, Yasir 'Arafat To Meet

NC2403132189 Cairo MENA in English 1231 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, March 24 (MENA)—A tripartite summit is likely to be held in Egypt within the next 48 hours between President Husni Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan and the Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat, MENA learned.

The summit to be held most probably in Ismailia comes shortly before President Mubarak's coming trip to Washington to meet with U.S. President Bush, and prior to the visit King Husayn of Jordan is to pay to Washington early in May.

The three leaders are expected to discuss the latest Mideast developments, especially these on the Palestinian arena, means of pushing forward the peace efforts, and the holding of the international peace conference.

Jordanian diplomatic sources in Cairo said that King Husayn is expected here tomorrow and that 'Arafat is expected within the coming 48 hours.

It is noteworthy to mention that King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia will start a two-day visit to Iraq tomorrow and will arrive here on Monday on a five-day visit to Egypt.

Israel's Weizman Willing To Meet With 'Arafat

NC2303223589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—'Ezer Weizmann, Israel's minister of science and development, has expressed his willingness to hold talks with Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee.

Weizmann said: I always tell the Israelis that we ought to talk to 'Arafat in order to know exactly what he wants.

In statements to appear in tomorrow's issue of AL-AHRAM newspaper, Weizmann said that the problem is to persuade the Israeli Government that a political and peaceful solution to the issue is also a solution to the West Bank and the intifadah [uprising] problems. In order for negotiations to take place, 'Ezer Weizmann said, one has to have a partner sitting across the table. I believe that partner is Yasir 'Arafat.

Weizmann said that the Israelis should learn that if they want to live in peace in the Middle East, they should work on a solution to the Palestinian problem. This cannot be accomplished, he added, except by sitting down and negotiating with Yasir 'Arafat.

Weizmann said that there are differences of opinion within the Labor Party and within Likud on ways to promote peace. He voiced the belief that Israel is currently divided right down the middle on this issue.

Weizmann said that Israel should accept the idea that the next step is to resolve the Palestinian issue. Therefore, we should speak with 'Arafat. Jordan should have a presence one way or the other. Egypt should also play its basic and vital role in the peace process. Egypt has leverage and potential that it could use in addressing Arab countries, the United States, Israel, and the rest of the world.

Weizmann expressed the belief that the intifadah will not die. Therefore, he said, I wish that there were someone in Likud who could convince Yitzhaq Shamir to change his position on this issue. Weizmann said that he told Shamir in the Israeli cabinet meetings that he should sit down and talk with 'Arafat.

Weizmann said that in the past there were voices in Israel saying that peace cannot be achieved between Egypt and Israel. People asked me: Can you trust Anwar al-Sadat? I used to give them the same answer I give now: How can I know if I have not met the man and talked to him? This is now the case with 'Arafat, Weizmann said. Weizmann recalled that he kept giving this answer until he met Al-Sadat and met [then vice] President Husni Mubarak in December 1977. He also met Dr Mustafa Khalil and Dr Butrus Ghali and other Egyptian leaders, and the dialogue and exchange of views began, Weizmann said.

We used to sit and talk for many hours until we succeeded in what we set out to do. I wish that the same thing would be repeated with the Palestinians, though I am sure this will be a bit more difficult.

Weizmann said that Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza will be a significantly sensitive and complicated process, but it is also necessary and inevitable. This withdrawal should take place in accordance with the clearly stated clauses of the Camp David accords, Weizmann said, but this may naturally take a long time. We must not forget that President al-Sadat arrived in Jerusalem in November 1977, but it was 16 months later that the peace accords between Egypt and Israel were concluded.

Weizman Leaves Cairo

NC2303221689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2128 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—'Ezer Weizmann, Israel's minister of science and development, and his delegation left Cairo tonight following a 5-day visit to Egypt. President Mubarak received Weizmann during the latter's stay in Cairo. The Israeli ambassador to Cairo accompanied Weizmann to the airport.

Shamir Refusal To Meet With PLO Criticized

NC2403111089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0608 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—The AL-AKHBAR newspaper has called on Israel's leaders to respond to President Husni Mubarak's statements to Israeli journalists, in which he urged the Israeli leaders to stop their constant practice of beating around the bush because they will have to sit face to face with Palestinian Leader Yasir 'Arafat and the rest of the Palestinian leaders.

In its editorial in today's edition, the paper says Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is living in a state of confusion and that every now and then he looks for pretexts for his refusal to meet with the PLO leaders. Perhaps the latest method to which Shamir has resorted to cover up his avoidance of real contact with the PLO is his readiness to talk to Palestinian figures from the occupied territories, even if they are PLO supporters and sympathetizers. The paper notes that this offer is timid and emanates from disturbed and self-contradictory thinking. All the Palestinian people residing in the occupied land, the paper says, have never concealed their full support for the PLO and its leader 'Arafat. If Shamir sits down with any Palestinians, it notes, he will not be able to conclude any agreement with them that is rejected by the PLO. Shamir knows this already and is only trying to gain time.

The paper points out that Shamir must abandon the technique of beating around the bush now that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and even members of Israeli intelligence, cabinet ministers, and university professors have declared that meeting with PLO representatives is the only way to reach a genuine peace in the Middle East.

Premier Returns From Morocco With Message

NC2403070089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0601 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and his delegation returned to Cairo early this morning from Rabat after attending the meetings of the Joint Egyptian-Moroccan Higher Committee.

In an arrival statement, Dr Sidqi said that he brought an oral message from Moroccan King Hssan II for Presidnet Husni Mubarak in reply to Mubvarak's message to the King. He said that during his meeting yesterday with the King he discussed issues of concern to the Arab nation, foremost among them the international peace conference, as well as the region's problems and the Gulf situation. He noted that King Hasan II had asserted the importance of coordination and cooperation between the newly established Arab groupings, the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union.

Butrus Ghali Leaves for African Tour 21 Mar

NC2103102589 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, left Cairo this morning at the start of an African tour that will take him to Mauritania, Mali, and Senegal.

Ghali said that he will deliver messages from President Husni Mubarak to the leaders of the three states on African issues and bilateral relations.

Butrus Ghali Views Ties With Sudan, Ethiopia

NC2203152189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, has emphasized that the solid ties between Egypt and Ethiopia are not at the expense of Sudan. He added that Egypt's goal is to establish distinguished relations between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia.

In an interview with the weekly magazine AL-MUSAWWAR, to be published on Friday, the day after tomorrow, Dr Ghali said that the goal of the Egyptian diplomacy over the past 10 years was to promote the

relations between Sudan and Ethiopia. Egypt cannot succeed in achieving this goal if it does not maintain friendly relations with both Sudan and Ethiopia.

To a question, Dr Ghali pointed out that Egypt is fully prepared to mediate in working out a solution of the dispute between north and south Sudan and between the Addis Ababa government and the separatist movement. He noted that this step needs the approval of the parties concerned.

Government To 'Freeze' Issue of POW's in Iran

JN2203164489 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 21 Mar 89 pp 1, 6

[Text] Diplomatic circles in Cairo have asserted that the Egyptian Government has definitively decided to freeze the issue of the Egyptian POW's held in Iran until an Iraqi-Iranian agreement is reached on a comprehensive exchange of the Gulf war's POW's.

These circles pointed out that Cairo had received information from many foreign states and sides confirming that no more than 146 Egyptian POW's are in Tehran prisons. Iran had claimed that thousands of Egyptian POW's were held in its prisons.

The diplomatic circles added that Cairo recently affirmed its full rejection of the Iranian extortion attempts. Egypt also rejected Tehran's preconditions to release the POW's, foremost of which were to normalize Egyptian-Iranian relations and release Iran's share in the capital of the Egypt-Iran Development Bank—estimated to be around $1 billion.

The circles asserted that most of the Egyptian POW's in Tehran are employees of the Iraqi Southern Oil Company, who were captured by Iran during its attack on the Iraqi island of Kharj [as published].

Kuwait To Receive Automated Rocket System

JN2303211689 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 22 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] Air Defense Commander Lieutenant General Mustafa al-Shadhili says Egypt has completed the automated security and control system that combines equipment from East and West, thus becoming the first country in the world to use this system. Egypt will open its doors to all of the Arab states and will be prepared to meet all of their requirements at any given time, said Al-Shadhili. The Air Defense commander said Kuwait will shortly take delivery of the Egyptian rocket system Ammun. Praising the successful experiment between Egypt and Kuwait in this field, he added that the technical cadres required to operate the rocket system in Kuwait are now receiving training.

A new balloon-supported airborne radar system, which also works as a backup to the airborne warning system has also been introduced, said Al-Shadhili. Also, Egyptian modifications have been introduced into the American rocket system "Hawk" to dovetail with the Egyptian air defense system.

UN Official Arrives for Africa Disarmament Talks

NC1903204589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Yasushi Akashi, UN assistant secretary general for disarmament, arrived in Cairo this evening to attend the Africa seminar on disarmament, which has been organized by the United Nations at the Foreign Ministry. The seminar, which will begin tomorrow, will continue for 4 days. [passage omitted]

'Abd al-Majid Addresses Forum

NC2003181689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has said that the nuclear arms race and the possibility of nuclear disasters constitute a general threat to the world and Africa in particular because the continent lacks the means to face such disasters.

In a speech today which Dr 'Abd al-Majid addressed to "The Seminar on Security and Disarmament in Africa," which was read by 'Aziz Sayf al-Nasr, assistant foreign minister, he called for the establishment of two nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and Africa.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Egypt and the African countries have a major responsibility within the International Atomic Energy Agency to pressure South Africa to sign the treaty for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. He also expressed the concern which Egypt and the Middle Eastern and African countries have over the possibility that both Israel and South Africa have acquired nuclear weapons.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Egypt and the nonaligned countries believe that there is a dire need for serious and intensive efforts to end the arms race, which is moving at a pace that threatens to exterminate mankind.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that the level of military expenditures in today's world is spectacular, while millions of people, notably in Africa, suffer from famine, malnutrition, and disease.

Yasushi Akashi, UN assistant secretary general for disarmament, delivered a speech at the same seminar. He hailed Egypt's cooperation and participation in the international campaign for disarmament. He said that Egypt is working diligently and enthusiastically to establish a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East. The UN official added that yesterday was a remarkable day because it crowned with success the efforts to restore

Tabah through international arbitration accepted by all parties. He said that the settlement of the Tabah issue was a triumph of reason and logic over the use of force.

Another speaker at the seminar, Ambassador Fawzi al-Abrashi, director of the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Institute, said that Egypt has taken a firm stand on disarmament and the elimination of the weapons of mass destruction.

The 4-day seminar, organized by the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Institute, in cooperation with the UN Program for Disarmament, will discuss several issues concerning disarmament and the African role in this regard, as well as the outcome of recent international developments in terms of security in Europe. The seminar is attended by UN experts, politicians, and intellectuals.

Nigerian Defense Minister Arrives 20 Mar

NC2003190289 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1824 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—Major General Domkat Bali, the Nigerian defense minister, arrived in Cairo this afternoon on an official several days' visit to Egypt. The visit comes at the invitation of Field Marshal 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production.

The Nigerian defense minister was welcomed on arrival by the commander of the central region.

Holds 'Military Talks'

NC2203111189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0950 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Egypt and Nigeria held military talks this morning under the chairmanship of Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, and Nigerian Defense Minister General Domkat Bali. [passage omitted]

Ways to bolster military cooperation in the fields of training and armaments were discussed during the talks. [passage omitted]

Departs After 6-Day Visit

NC2403083489 Cairo MENA in English 0711 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, March 24 (MENA)—Nigerian Defence Minister Domkat Bali and his delegation left here this morning at the end of a six-day visit. The Nigerian minister had talks with his Egyptian counterpart, Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, on military cooperation between the two countries with emphasis on training and armament domains.

Cairo Radio Cites IMF Policy on Debts

NC2103191789 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] The IMF managing director has disclosed that early next month the IMF will examine for the first time the extension of loans to Third World countries without having a third party acting as a guarantor. The IMF managing editor added that the IMF may cooperate in the implementation of Washington's initiative aiming at alleviating the burden of debts on Third World countries.

It is worth noting that the U.S. plan suggests that the IMF provide the debtor countries with additional funds to help them service their debts to the creditor banks.

EEC Offers Credit Facilities, Grants

JN2203092889 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 20 Mar 89 p 3

[Text] The European Economic Community [EEC] has agreed to grant Egypt credit facilities amounting to 449 million European Currency Units [ECU's], which is equivalent to $540 million, and unreturnable grants amounting to 200 million ECU's.

This was announced by Ibrahim al-Maraghi, undersecretary of the Ministry of International Cooperation, who said that the ministry will use these loans and grants to serve the various sectors.

He added that Dr Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation, will hold a series of meetings this week to follow up implementation of what was agreed on during the president's last European tour. He will also discuss relations with the EEC, follow up the European Investment Bank's loans, and discuss the results of the meetings of Egypt's joint committees with West Germany and the Netherlands.

Libya

JANA Editor on 'Terrorist Incidents'

LD2303185189 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Mar (JANA)—The JANA political affairs editor has been following with great attention and vigilance news and commentaries recently carried by certain media in order to link the great Jamahiriyah to certain terrorist incidents that have taken place in some countries of the world. These reports are made in order to offend and discred the great Jamahiriyah and its reputation. This is a clear attempt to create an atmosphere of confusion and prepare a new smear campaign against it.

While pointing out the aims behind such tendentious campaigns, the JANA political affairs editor would like to draw attention to what has already been stressed by the Jamahiriyah on numerous previous occasions: It strongly condemns terrorism and has no relationship

with any terrorist groups and organizations. The Jamahiriyah is prepared to cooperate with the international community for the sake of combatting any terrorist (?attack), particularly since it itself has been a victim of a terrorist attack.

Foreign Liaison Bureau Statement on Race Issue
LD2103190789 Tripoli JANA in English 1621 GMT 21 Mar 89

["People's Committee for Foreign Liaison Bureau and International Cooperation Releases a Statement of the International Day To Eliminate the Racial Discrimination"—JANA headline]

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Mirrikh [March] 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The People's Committee for Foreign Liaison bureau and International Cooperation released yesterday a statement on the anniversary of the international day to eliminate racial discrimination. The statement reads:

Today, 21st Al-Mirrikh, is the international day for the elimination of the racial discrimination. This day has been chosen by the world community as an occasion to bring to mind the bloody massacre perpetrated by the South African racist regime against African nationals in the city of Sharpeville in [date indistinct], and the denunciation of this horrible massacre that has shocked the conscience of the mankind. At the hands of the white oppressive racists, hundreds of black miners were killed while demonstrating peacefully in protest over the disregard for the African people.

The People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation in the great socialist people's Libyan Jamahiriyah, while saluting the international day on this savage massacre, would like to remind the world community that the racist apartheid policy pursued in South Africa gets consolidated and the racist regime there, instead of responding to the will of the world community and working for eliminating this policy, continues in its flagrant challenge to all international conventions and charters through making this policy as a law and imposing further inhuman measures against the black majority. This reconfirms that what some hope for bringing about a reform in the racist apartheid policy is impossible. The sole solution lies in abolishing this policy altogether. This can only be achieved through allowing the black majority to express their will freely and the release of its leaders, apart from recognizing their legitimate representatives.

The People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation expresses its genuine hope that the hoped-for independence of Namibia will represent a step towards the final elimination of racial apartheid.

This committee would also like to remind the international community of the racist practices and savage massacres being perpetrated by the Zionist gangs against the Palestinian Arab people in occupied Palestine. This people is struggling to redeem its usurped human rights and integrity.

The Zionist practices are principally based on a racist foundation surpassing in its enormity the practices perpetrated by nazism and fascism during the Second World War. The Zionist savage gangs bury people alive, demolish houses, compulsive deportation of the civilian inhabitants, oppressing children, women and elderly people, banishing and expelling the strugglers and pursuing them everywhere, apart from working to liquidate them.

The two racist regimes in South Africa and occupied Palestine are organically and closely connected in their racist practices. They both continue in perpetuating and strengthening this connection, which is immoral. No effort is needed to prove this as it is obvious. The world community has condemned and rejected the racist apartheid policy and has acknowledged the presence of this connection and cooperation. The UN General Assembly Resolution Number 3379 in 1975 regarding Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination is hard evidence revealing the racist nature of the Zionist entity.

The continuation of the two racist regimes in South Africa and in occupied Palestine and their perseverance in perpetrating grave violations of the most basic human rights and basic freedoms, apart from their flagrant defiance of international will would not have taken place without the economic, political and military support of the colonialist countries and international monopolies.

The People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation is of the opinion that in order to step up the process of elimianting all forms of racial discrimination, an interantional and strong collective will is to be shown to impose comprehensive economic, political and military sanctions forthwith against these two regimes, apart from stopping all forms of cooperation with them.

The world community is asked today more than before to firmly stand against the crimes perpetrated by the two racist regimes considering the establishment of any form of contact with them from any quarter as a complicity in the responsibility for the crimes committed by them against humanity.

This committee, on this occasion, would like to salute the genuine efforts made by the UN ever since its establishment in the sphere of combatting racism, racial discrimination. In this regard, the committee pays tribute to the results brought about for the last two decades by the UN—the first decade and the second one—to combat racism, racial discrimination, hoping that all member states shoulder their responsibility and commitments to support and shore up these efforts.

Morocco

Joint Committee With Egypt Continues Meetings

Hassan Meets With Sidqi

NC2303211189 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] His Majesty King Hasan II of Morocco received Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and the members of the Egyptian delegation, currently in Morocco to attend the meetings of the Joint Egyptian-Moroccan Higher Committee, in the royal palace in Marrakech this afternoon. Moroccan Prime Minister Dr Azzedine Laraki attended the meeting.

Following the 1-hour meeting, Dr Sidqi disclosed that he had delivered a handwritten message to King Hassan II from President Mubarak dealing with current Arab issues and ways of bolstering cooperation in various fields.

Dr Sidqi added that his majesty expressed affection for President Mubarak and the Egyptian people, and touched on issues that concern the Arab world, particularly the Palestinian issue and the need to hold an international conference to establish peace in the region. His majesty also stressed the need to find just and lasting solutions to Arab issues, particularly the Palestinian and Gulf issues.

Dr Sidqi added that his majesty underlined the importance of cooperation and coordination between the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union, as well as among Arab states.

In another development, Dr Laraki said his majesty gave instructions to eliminate all obstacles to facilitate the implementation of projects agreed upon during the meetings of the second session of the Joint Egyptian-Moroccan Higher Committee.

[Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic at 1600 GMT on 23 March adds that His Majesty King Hassan II, was "flanked by His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid." "The session was attended on the Egyptian side by Ahmad 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, and on the Moroccan side by Prime Minister Dr Azzedine Laraki; Abdellatif Filali, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation; and Ahmed Reda Guedira, his majesty's adviser."]

Investment Society Created

LD2303151189 Rabat MAP in English 1242 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Rabat, Mar 23, (MAP)—The Moroccan-Egyptian joint commission wound up here Wednesday [22 March] night its works by the signing of a series of accords and the minutes of the meetings of the commission. The closing session was co-chaired by the two countries prime ministers 'Atif Sidqi and Azzedine Laraki.

The first accord, signed by Moroccan Finance Minister Mohamed Berrada and Egyptian Minister of State of Cooperation Maurice Makramallah, provides for the creation of a joint investment development society of a capital worth 50 million dollars. The society will be based in Rabat.

The second accord signed by Berrada and his peer Muhammad Ahmad al-Razzaz deals with the means to avoid a double taxation of Moroccan and Egyptian exports from and to the two countries.

The third accord signed by Moroccan Minister of Commerce and Industry Abdallah Azmani and Egyptian Minister of Industry Muhammad Mahmud 'Abd al-Wahhab identifies the lists of goods and commodities which will benefit by customs facilities as part of the trade accord signed in 1988.

The two parties also signed an agreement under which maritime transports between the two countries will be developed as well as the accord on legal cooperation and the mutual recognition of the driving licences issued in the two countries.

They also signed the minutes on cooperation between Egypt and Morocco in industry, medium and small enterprises, energy, culture, labor, human resources and others.

Joint Communique Issued

NC2303183889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1534 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Rabat, 23 Mar (MENA)—Egypt and Morocco have reiterated support for the Palestinian popular intifadah [uprising] and its struggle to regain the rights of the Palestinian people.

The two sides denounced Israel's repressive measures against the Palestinians, stressing that these measures run counter to established human rights. They also emphasized the need to recognize the Palestinian people's right to establish a state on their national soil under the leadership of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The two sides also praised the support the Moroccan king and President Mubarak have shown for the Palestinian cause.

In a press release at the conclusion of its meetings, the joint Egyptian-Moroccan Higher Committee expressed regret over the prevailing situation in Lebanon and stressed the need to find a just and peaceful settlement to the Gulf dispute.

The Moroccan side expressed appreciation for the wise policy followed by President Mubarak and the Egyptian Government, which led to Tabah's return to Egyptian sovereignty. The Moroccan side also warmly congratulated the Egyptians on this great achievement.

In the statement, the higher committee underlined the importance of coordination between the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union, within the framework of collective Arab cooperation.

The higher committee also noted the agreements that had been signed between the two sides, including the Egyptian-Moroccan holding company for investment and development, the agreement on avoiding dual taxation and cooperation protocols in the fields of maritime transport, (?law), electricity, energy, education, culture, media and manpower.

Economic Accords Detailed

LD2303230989 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] [Passage indistinct] The second session of the Joint Moroccan-Egyptian Higher Committee was held in Rabat 21-23 March under the cochairmanship of Moroccan Prime Minister Azzedine Laraki, and Dr 'Atif Sidqi, prime minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The committee reviewed various aspects of cooperation between the two countries and expressed its great satisfaction with the level of existing fraternal understanding, the development of bilateral relations, the accomplishments achieved last year, and with the policy of consultation and coordination between the two states in various fields.

The committee discussed various political issues of common interest and examined in detail aspects of cooperation between the two countries in various fields. The committee made several decisions to reinforce and develop this cooperation.

On the political level, the two sides hailed the blessed Palestinian intifadah [uprising], which truly reflects the attachment of the militant Palestinian people to its inalienable rights. They denounced Israel's repressive methods and practices, which violate human rights. The two sides affirmed their support and backing for this intifadah, hoping that it will achieve its goals with the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination; the establishment of its state on its national territory, under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative the PLO; and the realization of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

On this occasion, the two sides hailed the continuous efforts that His Majesty King Hassan II and His Excellency President Husni Mubarak are constantly making in support of the Palestinian cause, at the Arab, Islamic, and international levels.

The two sides expressed their deep regret at the continuation of the present situation in Lebanon and affirmed their support for the efforts of the Arab League six-man committee aimed at achieving national entente and preserving Lebanon's unity, stability, and Arabism.

The two sides expressed their satisfaction with the end of the Iran-Iraq war and their hope that the two parties concerned will reach a peaceful settlement that will restore stability and security to the region and pave the way for the mobilization of reconstruction efforts and the realization of development and prosperity.

Reviewing the current situation in the Arab world and the efforts made to clear the air and to reinforce Arab solidarity and regional solidarity, the two sides congratulated each other on the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union, and said that they believe that the two Arab groups constitute, together with the Gulf Cooperation Council, an important phase on the path of joint Arab cooperation and a step toward the desired comprehensive Arab unity.

The Moroccan side expressed its esteem for the wise and clear-sighted policy adopted by the Arab Republic of Egypt to return the region of Tabah to the homeland. It expressed its warm congratulations to the fraternal Egyptian people on this great achievement.

The two sides believe that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan heralds the imminence of a final solution to the issue of this Muslim fraternal country, and they expressed their hope that the Afghan people will realize its legitimate goals with the recovery of its sovereignty and national unity.

The two sides welcomed the imminent birth of the new state of Namibia, and they expressed their great satisfaction with the manifestations of international detente, hoping to see this detente lead to the elimination of the hot beds in various parts of the world.

At the level of the economic, technical, cultural, and social cooperation, the following measures were taken:

1. The holding company: An agreement was initialled setting up a Moroccan-Egyptian company for development and investment with $50 million in capital and headquartered in Rabat. This company will execute joint projects, and this will give a strong boost to economic relations and development efforts in the two countries.

2. An agreement for the removal of dual taxation was signed, and this will play a complementary role in facilitating the holding company's activities and operations.

3. The two sides agreed on the lists of goods appended to the preferential tariff and trade agreement signed in Cairo on 30 May 1988. They agreed on the rates of tax exemption on the exchanged goods.

Obstacles which hindered the implementation of the two [words indistinct] for 1986 and 1988 will help develop commercial exchanges between the two countries.

4. In view of the importance of commercial transport in invigorating the trade exchange, an agreement on merchant navigation between the two countries was signed.

5. An agreement on judicial cooperation in the civilian and commercial fields and an agreement on judicial coperation in criminal matters were signed.

6. An agreement under which mutual validity is given to driving licences—national [word indistinct] in the two countries, was signed.

7. The industrial field received the attention of the joint higher committee, which recommended a study of setting up joint projects in the sphere of small- and medium-size industries and (?speeding up) the convening of the permanent subcommittee on industry.

8. Cooperation in the spheres of electricity and energy received the attention of the higher joint committee, and it was decided to hold the second meeting of the committee on electricity and energy in (?early) 1990 for the purpose of strengthening cooperation in this field. In light of the recommendations of the specialist action groups, the questions of an electrical link between the Arab Maghreb states, of linking the Arab Maghreb countries with the unified European grid, and also the program of linking power between Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey was also discussed.

9. In the sphere of construction, the committee recommended that contractor companies in the two countries should receive the same treatment as national companies in each of the other countries.

10. In the sphere of education, the committee decided to ask the two sides to prepare the executive program as specified in the cultural and scientific agreement of 1971 and (?1972).

11. The Moroccan side confirmed its readiness to restock the old (Al-Qadiriyyah) library with relevant documents and books.

12. In the sphere of antiquities, the Egyptian side expressed the readiness of the Egyptian antiquities department to set up an exhibition of Pharonic antiquities in Morocco this year.

13. In the sphere of manpower, the committee took note of what had been agreed between the two ministers concerned on setting up a joint committee to study ways to invigorate the movement of workforces. The committee also recommended the establishment of a joint committee, under the auspices of the Moroccan Ministry of Employment and the Egyptian Ministry of Expatriate Affairs, for the purpose of defining a framework for cooperation in the field of assisting expatriates.

14. The two sides also studied means to strengthen cooperation in other fields, particularly agriculture, mining, water, health, Islamic affairs, (?appointments), social affairs, tourism, information, youth affairs, sport, and scientific research.

The two sides adopted the necessary resolutions and recommendations aimed at strengthening cooperation and realizing the desired prosperity for the two fraternal peoples.

The Egyptian side expressed its great pleasure at visiting the Moroccan kingdom, and its gratitude for the welcome and hospitality afforded by the Moroccan king, government, and people. In this connection, the prime minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt expressed his pride and appreciation for the meeting granted him by his majesty King Hassan II and the noble sentiments his majesty expressed during the meeting reflecting the depth of the fraternal, firm relations between his majesty and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and also the eagerness of his majesty to strengthen the blessed march of bilateral fraternal cooperation.

Sudan

Al-Ummah Party Agrees To Form New Government

NC2403121189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1102 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 24 Mar (MENA)—The Sudanese Al-Ummah Party Presidential Council held a meeting that lasted until late last night under the chairmanship of party leader and Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. In its meeting, the party council agreed to form a broad-based government including all political parties, especially the leftists and trade unions, and to prepare for the forthcoming elections scheduled for the 1st half of next year.

Al-Mahdi has stated that it was decided to reorganize the Al-Ummah Party in order to face the next phase. Under the new organization, Nasr al-Din al-Hadi will keep his post as the party's deputy leader, Dr 'Umar Nur al-Dayim will be appointed secretary general designate of the party, and Bakri Ahmad 'Adil will be appointed deputy secretary general designate of the party. Al-Mahdi asserted that Dr 'Umar Nur al-Dayim, minister of finance and economic planning, will remain in the cabinet—which is to be announced in the next few hours—on a temporary basis so that he may supervise outlining a new budget, after which he will assume party work as of July.

Meanwhile, a responsible military source stated that the Sudanese Armed Forces have completed preparations to regain the city of Nasir in the Upper Nile, which was captured by the rebel forces last month along with six other southern cities. The source added that the Armed Forces have made an integrated plan to recover the city.

Interior Minister Views 'Exercise in Democracy'

PM1603160389 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 15-21 Mar 89 p 20

[Unattributed interview with Interior Minister Mubarak al-Mahdi in Cairo—date not given]

[Text] [Interviewer] What is the truth about the present situation in Khartoum?

[Al-Mahdi] Democracy in the countries which exercise democracy and have coalition governments is exposed to experiences of this kind. But the new factor in Sudan's recent events is the Armed Forces' memorandum, which I believe is the product of circumstances and is not associated with any power ambitions on the Army's part. Among these circumstances is the war in the south, where the fighting has escalated and foreign interference increased in the recent period. As has been reported, the Armed Forces focused on the need to arm the Army to enable it to cope with the war, the need to organize the internal front in support of the Army in the face of aggression, and in addition the need to reorganize foreign relations so that the Army benefits from them in repulsing foreign aggression. Moreover, by giving predominance to the peace slogan over the war slogan the government forced the Army to submit its memorandum. What has happened can be considered an "exercise in democracy." But the strange thing is that regular forces have been involved in the event. As for the ultimatum set in the Army memorandum, that aimed at provoking a response, and nothing else. This is why the ultimatum expired and nothing happened.

[Interviewer] Do you believe that politics had been misused, which is why the military was forced to intervene?

[Al-Mahdi] We cannot say that the politicians misused power. What happened was merely excesses in exercising democracy. For instance, the press turned to insults and sensationalism rather than objectivity, thus affecting the atmosphere. Furthermore, the unions exploited the democratic climate and violated the law, especially in the strike incidents. All that led to a somewhat chaotic situation—which affected democracy and power. A law for the press is being prepared. And some amendments to union laws are also being made. All this is happening in the light of the lesson learned from the experience of the past 2 ½ years.

[Interviewer] What about the south?

[Al-Mahdi] The Sudanese Government has presented 14 peace initiatives. I personally held a dialogue last month and another last week with elements from the south. But that was met with unflexible attitudes. To prove what I am saying, we in principle did not reject the agreement signed in Ethiopia by the Democratic Unionist Party with John Garang. We opposed two of its clauses, namely the abolition of the military agreements that harm national sovereignty (here Al-Mahdi pointed out that there were no agreements harming sovereignty) and the lifting of the state of emergency before a cease-fire which is illogical, because the state of emergency is linked to a cease-fire.

[Interviewer] What about the [National] Islamic Front's refusal to participate in the government if the Communist Party joins it?

[Al-Mahdi] First of all, the principle of expanding power-sharing was referred to parliament by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi because the door is open to participation. In Sudan there is direct participation in government and indirect participation in national issues and in the accord charter on which the government and all the agreed parties are based.

[Interviewer] What about Egyptian-Sudanese relations?

[Al-Mahdi] I admit that there is tension in Egyptian-Sudanese relations. But the cloud will soon be dispelled, because the officials are fully convinced of the need for good relations between the two fraternal countries. I hope that relations will return to their previous status.

Government 'Awaits' Rebel Reply to Cease-Fire

EA2003141989 Khartoum SUNA in English 0920 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 20th March SUNA—The Sudanese Government is still awaiting a decision from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, SPLM, on the cease-fire with aim at taking the necessary measures for transporting relief items to the famine-hit people in the war areas, the daily newspaper AL-SUDANI of today reported. The paper said that the SPLM had agreed in principle on cease-fire after the contacts conducted by the executive director of UNICEF, adding that the rebel movement did not announce officially the cease-fire.

Minister Denies Libyan-Rebel Forces Clash

EA1903204989 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The Darfur regional minister of housing and public utilities, Mr (Adullah Ali Mashar), today issued a statement in reply to what was published by AL-RAY in its issue last Thursday regarding serious clashes between Libya and the rebel movement in Darfur. The statement said that there are no Libyan or rebel foces in Darfur. The statement said the report was false, adding that such news items are harmful to the regional governments efforts to bring about tribal reconciliation in Darfur. He demanded that newspapers should be truthful in what they publish.

Rebels Not Notified of Peace Plan Acceptance

EA2303171189 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] SPLM-SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army] official spokesman, in a statement to Radio SPLA today, dismissed as untrue Mr Sadiq al-Mahdi's claim that he had notified the movement of his government's acceptance of the SPLM-DUP [Democratic Unionist Party] November 1988 peace initiatives. The spokesman described the claim as clumsy and hasty

propaganda quite remote from reality, misleading, and another relapse into the world of make-believe which is not conducive to cultivation of confidence.

It is to be recalled that Sadiq yesterday claimed that he had sent his cousin Mubarak Abdullahi al-Fadil to Addis Ababa to convey his government's acceptance of the DUP-SPLM peace initiatives to the movement and that he was waiting for the SPLM response. On the contrary, it is the SPLM that is waiting for Mr Sadiq to form his fourth government and to see what concrete steps that government will take towards implementing the SPLM-DUP peace initiatives. Mr Mubarak could not possibly have conveyed the acceptance by Sadiq's government of the SPLM-DUP peace initiative since such a government has not been formed. This is putting the cart before the horse.

As to Mr Mubarak's visit, the spokesman confirmed that the movement did meet the prime minister's cousin, not as a government envoy, but as a member of the Ummah Party, and this was made clear to Mr Mubarak. The movement has already replied to Mr Mubarak's visit and did so in writing, and if Sadiq has not got this reply he should ask his cousin not to issue a misleading statement that he is waiting for the movement's response. The times of nonsubstantive political acrobatics are long gone and people must take each other seriously in consonance with the realities of the situation, the spokesman concluded.

Armed Forces Confront Rebels Around Juba

EA2303205289 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1245 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Rebel forces are trying to create a state of terror among people in the Equatoria Region and to force them to leave the area by random shelling of parts of Juba and its environs. Our forces in the remaining areas of operations are continuing to confront rebel groups and our air forces are continuing to strike at their positions. They are also sending supplies to remote areas. The forces in Bor, Yei, and Maridi have been supplied, and supplies are on their way to other forces now.

Mr Morris Lawiya, governor of Equatoria, has issued a statement condemning the barbaric acts of the rebels and calling on citizens to observe civil defense instructions to assist the government in defending their lives and property. His Excellency and members of the regional security committee have also inspected areas affected by the shelling.

On 18 and 19 March the rebels carried out random artillery shelling of the outskirts of Juba, aiming at some populated areas of the town from distances ranging between 30 and 26 km. The Armed Forces replied to the shelling and immediately moved toward the rebel positions where they silenced the guns. Our forces are also continuing to comb the areas around the town to prevent the rebels from getting closer.

Kuwait

Envoy to Syria Denies Delivering Lebanese Message

LD2303223289 Kuwait KUNA in English 1956 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, March 23 (KUNA)—Kuwait's Ambassador in Damascus Ahmad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Jasim Thursday denied that he carried any message from any Lebanese official to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Al-Jasim told KUNA that reports, published in the Lebanese press today, are baseless.

The Kuwaiti diplomat is due to head for Lebanon in the next couple of days to hold talks with Lebanese officials, in accordance with instructions by Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, who is also head of the Arab League six-man Committee on Lebanon.

Al-Jasim was in Beirut last Monday and Tuesday where he handed invitations from Shaykh Sabah to former Lebanese presidents, premiers and parliamentarians to meet with the committee in Tunis March 27-28.

He also conferred with acting Premier Salim al-Huss, head of the military government Michel 'Awn, and ex-Parliament speaker Hoseyn al-Hoseyni and also Muslim and Christian leaders, in an effort to cool off the situation on the Lebanese arena.

Thai Official Delivers Message to Prime Minister

LD2303221889 Kuwait KUNA in English 1729 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 23 (KUNA)—Thai state minister attached to the Thai Prime Minister's Office Kon Thappharangsi, currently here, told a press conference that he conveyed a message from his premier to Crown Prince and Premier Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim Al Sabah on bilateral relations.

Thappharangsi said he discussed with Oil Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah al-'Athbi the possibility of establishing joint ventures in oil field between the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the Public Petroleum Authority (PPA) in his country. He said the two sides agreed to explore for oil in two areas under the concession of the PPA, saying a delegation from the Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Comapny (KFPEC) would proceed to Bangkok during next week for technical talks with PPA officials.

Thappharangsi said he discussed with Shaykh 'Ali Kuwait's desire to take part in jets fuel services in Bangkok Airport through KPC, saying a working team from KPC would proceed to Bangkok to consider establishment of gas stations in Thailand.

He added that his government welcomes Kuwait's interest in investment in the country, saying he also discussed with the Chairman of the Kuwaiti Chamber of Industry and Commerce 'Abd al-Aziz Hamid al-Saqr the possibility of establishing non-oil ventures.

Thappharangsi said his country offers foreign investors an eight-year tax exemption.

New Investment Plan To Benefit Expatriates

JN2303163189 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 22 Mar 89 pp 1, 7

[By Jadranka Porter]

[Text] Kuwait is to launch a new investment scheme which will for the first time grant expatriates the right to invest locally on equal terms with Kuwaiti nationals.

Real estate funds, as a new investment instrument, will invest money raised from small investors who will not be given the corporate ownership privileges that stockholders have.

The funds are primarily aimed at middle-class Kuwaitis, smaller businesses and expatriates who are unable to make overseas investments, said 'Abd al-Rahman al-Humud, a member of a special committee at the Kuwait Stock Exchange which proposed the scheme.

Al-Humud, who is also the general manager of Alshal Real Estate Consultancy and Services Co., said the funds would be of particular benefit to Arab expatriates with long residence in Kuwait, such as Palestinians, Jordanians and Egyptians, who are unfamiliar with overseas investment opportunities.

The plan is to be submitted next week to Fatwa wa Tashir', a legal body which is expected to give the scheme a final seal of approval and issue legislation governing the funds establishment and management, Dr Safaq al-Rukaybi of the Kuwait Stock Exchange told the Arab times.

The funds will help soak up excess liquidity on the local market.

"There is too much mnoney chasing too few opportunities" said Al-Humud.

The funds, which are planned to be set up by reputable real estate companies starting in June, will issue units of various denominations. The real estate companies will then launch an advertising campaign to market the funds. They will also approach their existing clientele with the scheme.

The funds will be registered at the stock market where the units will be traded. A secondary market will also be created, with market makers buying and selling the units on the stock market. Fund managers will also buy back the units from any investors willing to sell.

Al-Humud said that 75 to 80 percent of the funds will be invested on the local market, while the rest of the money will be placed in overseas property and real estate companies.

A committee, to be appointed by the Kuwait Stock Exchange, will exercise a tight control of the funds operation. Its task will be to make sure fund managers meet the legal requirements, maintain a certain level of liquidity, use external auditors and engage foreign firms to appraise the property they are investing in. The committee will be authorised to check the issuers books, and dismiss or appoint new fund managers, Al-Humud said.

Fund managers will be required to make quarterly public reports on their operation.

Among the companies which are certain to set up real estate funds are Alshall, which initiated the scheme, and the Kuwait Finance House.

Alshall hopes to raise KD [Kuwait dinar] 10 million by issuing KD1,000 units, Al-Humud said. It will charge investors a management fee of one percent and will also collect 10 per cent of their profits. The investments will be divided into different categories, with about 40 percent of the fund going towards real estate investments with a fixed rate of return. About 25 percent of the raised capital will be used for speculation on the real estate market, while the rest will be invested abroad.

Al-Humud said he had noted a considerable interest in the fund among Kuwaitis who are familirar with the plan. Unlike the stock market which attracts both the speculators and investors, the funds will be of interest only to the latter, Al-Humud said.

Businessmen Debate Effects of New Labor Law

JN2303162789 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 22 Mar 89 pp 1, 2

[By Jadranka Porter]

[Text] Kuwait, March 21: Only a day before Kuwait's new labour law went into effect Kuwait's business community was still debating its merits and the effect it will have on the country's economy.

Opinions varied on whether the new measures will usher in a new wave of efficiency or leave the private firms short of skilled labour.

There was a consensus on one point though—managers of hotels, transport companies, trading houses and consultancy firms contacted by the ARAB TIMES all agreed that the new law will cost them money.

A five-star hotel manager said that new budget allocations will have to be made for the airfares of employees at the end of their three year contracts and for those who might be sacked before their contracts expire.

Tahir Sha'th, the manager of Team International, a management and engineering consultancy firm, said private firms will now have to invest more in the training of their fultime employees, who will have to cover the jobs of the departing part-timers. This could vastly improve the efficiency of Kuwait's labour force, he added.

"The firms should now give their purchasing officers a short course in accountancy so that they can take the place of part-time accountants. Typists should learn to use word-processors in which they can store the whole accounting system and take care of the company's inventory," said Sha'th.

If companies make sure their employees gain additional skills they will win their loyalty, something that is now largely missing in Kuwait's firms, he said.

An investment in training will also pay off in the form of increased productivity, Sha'th predicted.

Part-timers have never been very productive, he added.

Sha'th said the new labour law will help syphon out "junk" labour. He called on Kuwaiti employers to offer equal training opportunities to expatriates and nationals.

But he regretted that the implementation of the law had not been postponed for another three months.

"People who have part-time jobs are running around like crazy. Engineers who came into the country as drivers but got part-time engineering jobs will have to go back to driving. We shall now have accountants working as messengers and teachers working as cleaners" said Sha'th.

Other businessmen expressed their reservations about the new labour law. A manager of a large trading house said it will kill the mobility of Kuwait's labour force.

"We already face restrictions on bringing in new labourers. With part-timers gone who will I turn to?" asked a manager of a freight and forwarding firm.

Employers also bemoaned the fact that they will not be able to hire and fire as they used to. They said they will face difficulties in firing employees on humanitarian grounds, and at the same time fear they might not find an adequate replacement for the sacked worker.

"It will be difficult to fire someone knowing that the only choice he has is to leave the country," said one employer.

The employers appeared to have little faith in Kuwaiti and Gulf nationals whom they might have to employ if they lose an expatriate worker.

A number of businessmen said the law took them by surprise and that they were not clear on how it will be implemented.

"With the ceasefire in the Gulf war, we expected the authorities to ease up the labour regulations to encourage business activity. I don't think this law will help the economy," said one businessman.

Another complained that the law is not straightforward enough.

"I will hire a lawyer to tell me what it means for me" he said.

PDRY

Defense Minister Seeks Syrian Expertise

JN2303185889 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 22 Mar 89 p 8

[AL-ITTIHAD Damascus bureau]

[Text] According to military sources of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY], the recent visit of the PDRY's defense minister to the Syrian capital was mainly concerned with military matters. The defense minister focused on three points: seeking Syrian military expertise, especially in the Air Force, as both countries depend for their weapons on the same source—the USSR; sending Yemeni officers to attend Al-Asad Military Academy; and attendance of Yemeni officers at Syrian military schools for staff command courses.

Military ties between Syria and the PDRY date back 20 years or so; Syrian officers have contributed to developing all the services of the PDRY, notably the Air Force.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd To Pay Official Visit to Baghdad 25 Mar

LD2303175689 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1654 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 23 Mar (SPA)—A Royal Court decree announces the following:

At the will of the exhalted God and His care, the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, will pay an official visit to the fraternal Republic of Iraq on 25 March in response to a gracious invitation he received from his brother His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic of Iraq.

God save the Custodian Of the two holy mosques in his travel and his stay, and provide him with His support and guidance in all that he wishes and desires.

Yemen Arab Republic

Joint North-South Ministerial Meetings Held

'Press Statement' on 1st Session

JN2303210589 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The 1989 first session of the joint ministerial council between the two parts of the homeland that was held between 21 and 23 March in the capital of the unity state, Sanaa, ended this afternoon. The meetings were cochaired by Brothers 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, prime minister and member of the Standing Committee; and Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, member of the [Yemeni Socialist Party] Political Bureau and prime minister of the southern part of the homeland.

At the beginning of the final meeting, minutes of the joint ministerial committee session were reviewed. Then, Brothers 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani and Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man signed the minutes of the joint committee's session. [passage omitted]

A press statement was issued at the end of the session on the results of the 1989 first session of the joint ministerial committee. Following is the text of the press statement:

In an atmosphere filled with the spirit of constructive and honest work on the path of reactivating Yemeni unity and within the framework of the persistent efforts exerted by the leaderships of the two parts of the homeland to achieve that lofty objective, the joint ministerial council held the meetings of the first session for 1989 in Sanaa between 21 and 23 March 1989—corresponding to 14 to 16 Sha'ban 1409 Hegira—under the chairmanship of Brother 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, prime minister and member of the Standing Committee, and Brother Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, member of the Political Bureau and prime minister of the southern part of the homeland.

During the meetings of this session, the joint ministerial committee discussed the topics on its agenda, including the report presented by the Secretariat of the Yemeni Supreme Council. The report includes an assessment of the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the third session of the joint ministerial council and the unity activities that took place between the last two sessions. The joint ministerial committee also discussed the results of the Yemeni summit meetings and the meetings and exchanged visits between the the officials on bith sides on all levels, in all fields, and on various governmental and popular levels, as well as the progress of the work of the joint projects and companies.

The joint committee also reviewed the results of implementing the agreement signed in Ramadan, May 1988, that played an important part in developing the unity action and moving it foward in its most important aspects, which are related to the reality of the unity of land and mankind. This agreement has been effective on

the national level and was welcomed and appreciated by our Yemeni people. The agreement includes the free movement of citizens with personal identity cards and the establishment of joint oil investments.

The joint ministerial committee expressed its satisfaction with the results of all the visits, meetings, and activities as they constitute important steps on the path of reestablishing unity.

The ministerial committee praised the role of the two political leaderships in the two parts under brothers Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, and 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the Central Committee. The instructions and honest efforts of the two leaders played a major role in attaining the unity achievements.

The ministerial committee affirmed the importance of absolute concern to implement all aspects organized by the Ramadan May 1988 agreement. The committee agreed that the unity committees will resume their work at specified periods of time. Among these unity committees is the committee for unified political organization that was formed during this session.

The ministerial committee discussed a number of issues related to developing areas of cooperation and coordination between the two parts. The committee adopted a number of resolutions and recommendations to reinforce and develop the existing fields of cooperation and coordination and to expand the fields of cooperation to cover new horizons in the economic and development spheres as well as the agricultural, industrial, trade, and transportation sectors. The objective is to build bridges of integration and development between the two parts and to expand the activities of coordination between government and popular organizations and institutions.

The ministerial committee gave instructions to activate and develop unity measures in culture and education. The objective is to bring together educational curricula and teaching aids, as well as cultural activities.

The fraternal bilateral meetings that took place during this session between officials from the two parts produced positive results to reinforce and develop coordination in many vital fields.

As the ministerial committee expresses its full satisfaction with the results it attained during this session, it reiterates its determination to proceed on the path of restoring unity to achieve the aspirations and hopes of our Yemeni people. Success comes from God.

[Dated] 23 March 1989, corresponding to 16 Sha'ban 1409 Hegira, Sanaa

4th Meeting Closes

EA2403124389 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The Fourth North-South Joint Ministerial Committee Meeting held its closing session in Sanaa today under the chairmanship of brothers Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, Politburo member and prime minister, and 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, member of the Yemen Arab Republic Standing Committee and prime minister. The session heard the resolutions and recommendations of the Fourth Meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee held from 21 to 23 March. Closing the session, Brothers Yasin Sa'id Nu'man and 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani signed the minutes of the Fourth Joint Ministerial Committee Meeting and ministers from the south signed minutes of meetings with their northern conterparts. Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man expressed gratitude to his brother 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani after the signing ceremony. [passage indistinct]

In his reply, Brother 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani expressed satisfaction with the fruitful outcome of the fourth joint ministerial committee meeting and thanked those who contributed to the success of the session, as exemplified in the leadership of brothers 'Ali Salim al-Bid and 'Ali 'Abdullah Salih who made their recommendations. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd To Visit 25 Mar

JN2303210089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—At the invitation of President Saddam Husayn, His Majesty King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques and king of fraternal Saudi Arabia, will pay an official visit to Iraq lasting several days beginning Saturday [25 March].

This was announced by the Presidential Office here tonight.

Tariq 'Aziz Receives Lebanon's Abu Jamrah

JN2303191789 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] This evening, Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received 'Isam Abu Jamrah, Lebanese deputy prime minister and minister of economy and trade.

During the meeting, they discussed relations between the two fraternal countries and means to strengthen and improve them in all fields. They also discussed the Lebanese situation and the efforts of the six-member Arab committee.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister asserted Iraq's full support for the Lebanese people's steadfastness against the threats dictated by foreign forces on Lebanon's unity, security, and stability. The meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministry undersecretary.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Pays Visit

Meets With Saddam Husayn

JN2303124289 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1104 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—President Saddam Husayn received Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Omar Abu Hassan this morning. The Malaysian minister conveyed to President Saddam Husayn the greetings of his majesty the king [as received] of Malaysia and its prime minister and their desire to promote and enhance relations with Iraq in the political, economic, cultural, and technical fields.

His excellency welcomed the promotion of Iraqi-Malaysian relations in all fields. He asked the Malaysian minister to convey his greetings to his majesty the king of Malaysia and its prime minister. During the meeting, they discussed the latest developments in the Iraqi-Iranian negotiations. President Saddam Husayn stressed Iraq's principled stand throughout the years of the conflict. This position is one that seeks a lasting and comprehensive peace based on mutual respect for sovereignty and noninterference in domestic affairs. Iraq also wants the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran to end their conflict and begin achieving the objective which Iraq has sought and still seeks, namely, a lasting and comprehensive peace.

For his part, the Malaysian foreign minister voiced his government's hope that a comprehensive solution to the Iraqi-Iranian conflict will be attained and that peace and stability will be established in the region. Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the Malaysian ambassador in Baghdad attended the meeting.

Holds Talks With Hammadi

JN2303133089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—Sa'dun Hammadi, minister of state for foreign affairs, received Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Omar Abu Hassan today. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and ways to develop them further. They also reviewed the most important Arab and international issues.

Discusses Trade With Minister

JN2303184789 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1810 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih met here today with Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Omar Abu Hassan and his delegation.

During the meeting, they reviewed the development of bilateral economic relations and discussed the means to enlarge the volume of trade and commercial exchange between the two countries.

Shamir on U.S. Trip, Ties With Jordan, Egypt

TA2403124889 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Mar 89 p B1

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Ilan Bakhar in Jerusalem—date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Bakhar] What kind of ideas will you take to Washington on your forthcoming trip? Will you present anything new?

[Shamir] I am taking to the United States ideas that I think are good. I will try to make the Americans see them in the same light. When we have to present a position to a country as important as the United States, we describe the situation as it stands now and do not simply repeat ourselves each time.

[Bakhar] Do you mean in accordance with the famous principles such as those included in the Camp David accords?

[Shamir] There are indeed principles, but there are also other things that derive from the latest developments. I will tell the administration members things they may not have heard from me before. By that, I mean primarily ideas regarding the interim arrangement.

[Bakhar] Do you attribute special significance to the visit?

[Shamir] I am not making too much of my next trip to the United States. One should not overrate the significance of each visit. One cannot finish some business and complete deals in the course of just a few meetings or after merely 2 days in Washington. This is a step, another link in the chain of our relations with the United States. We will try to explain our position and hear theirs. The aim will be to achieve an understanding and cooperation. This can always help us, although sometimes we are not successful.

[Bakhar] But even now there are differences of opinion, at least inasmuch as the PLO is concerned.

[Shamir] The secretary of state mentioned our differences, and there is nothing wrong in that. There are differences also between the United States and its NATO allies, but they do not affect their alliance.

[Bakhar] But what about these specific differences?

[Shamir] I will discuss with Secretary Baker his statement that Israeli-PLO talks should not be dismissed. He also said that he objects to a Palestinian state. There appears to be a contradiction here, which I intend to raise, as the PLO demands a Palestinian state as a minimum.

U.S. recognition of the PLO as worthy of participating in a dialogue is in itself dangerous. It is a serious matter. Here we differ with the United States. During my visit, I will explain why we view this policy as a negative phenomenon.

[Bakhar] Why negative?

[Shamir] It has substantially encouraged the people who orchestrate the violence and organize disturbances in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. It was presented as the outcome of the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails and of the strikes. Nothing can better encourage the continuation of these acts than results. Presented as an achievement, it encourages the Arabs to engage in more of the same to score greater successes.

[Bakhar] How can we change the atmosphere in the territories?

[Shamir] The atmosphere in the territories can be changed in a day or 2. They must cease all acts of violence, and then the atmosphere will improve. Everything that we are doing actually stems from the violence against us. If there are no acts of violence, the situation will immediately be completely different.

If, however, we declare a total withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces [IDF] from these areas, I am not sure this will result in calm. We have seen that insofar as the Arabs are concerned, it is precisely at such times that they step up the violence and provocation.

[Bakhar] We could take some steps to ease the tension, such as reducing the IDF presence and releasing administrative detainees.

[Shamir] A reduction forces in urban centers, the release of administrative detainees, and other administrative moves aimed at easing the burden can be discussed. Nothing here is a matter of principle on which we refuse to budge. Nevertheless, I do not think that herein lies the solution to the situation.

[Bakhar] The Intelligence Branch's analysis maintains that there are no leaders in the territories except those affiliated with the PLO. Elections would prove that as well. With whom will we talk, and what will we discuss with them?

[Shamir] There are a number of ideas that could persuade and influence elements outside the region. We are seeking ways to resolve some of the conflicts of interest between us and various elements in the region.

The Arabs are not crazy about elections. Where else in the Arab world are democratic elections held? There is no such thing. It does not exist.

There may be leaders in the territories who are not connected to the PLO. Some of them are intellectuals, educated people. I will not mention names, because this could harm them. My meetings with Palestinians in the territories continue. It is interesting to learn to understand these people and convey my thoughts to them.

[Bakhar] Actually, a Palestinian state could be more threatening to Jordan than to us. Does Jordan admit that?

[Shamir] Jordan knows that a Palestinian state poses a greater threat to Jordan than to Israel. Yet, although it realizes this, it is not saying as much because King Husayn is scared. He, too, is not immune to the sniper's bullet and has had a very bad experience with this. I have no doubt, however, that he is not interested in a Palestinian state.

[Bakhar] What do you want from Jordan?

[Shamir] I want to reach formal peace with Jordan and to have a certain degree of cooperation—both because of our common border and because part of the Jordanian population is Palestinian.

[Bakhar] Will we ask Jordan to extradite the terrorists who infiltrated into the 'Arava?

[Shamir] We will not demand that Jordan extradite the terrorists who killed the soldier in the 'Arava. This is not normally done. We will demand that Jordan make sure that the border remains quiet.

[Bakhar] In retrospect, do you think you erred in rejecting the "London document" that Peres achieved?

[Shamir] The rejection of the London accord does not change a thing, nor would it have changed the situation at all. The purpose of the accord was to reach an international conference, and I still believe that such a conference would cause us tremendous damage and put enormous pressure on us to accept demands such as a complete withdrawal to the 1967 lines or a Palestinian state. Such a conference would have decided on such things, or at least it would have recommended them.

[Bakhar] What is your reaction today to such political plans as Yitzhaq Rabin's or the one Peres has in his drawer?

[Shamir] Both are subjects for discussion. In our country we are prepared to convince and to be persuaded.

[Bakhar] The 10th anniversary of peace with Egypt will be marked on Sunday. Are you disappointed with this cool peace?

[Shamir] No. Peace with Egypt is a process. The differences between us and the Arab countries are so vast that they cannot be bridged in one fell swoop or with the scribble of a pen on one document. It is a process that takes time. The peace agreement was, in fact, the first step in this process. It began the process, but progress is very slow. Very slow.

[Bakhar] Yet President Mubarak complimented Israel for honoring commitments.

[Shamir] That is true. We do honor agreements and commitments of every sort. We cannot, however, say the same for Egypt. The Camp David agreements, for example, are not being implemented by all the sides. We are committed to them and have not done anything in violation of their content. Others have not implemented them.

[Bakhar] Is there any chance of a meeting between yourself and President Mubarak or King Husayn in the near future?

[Shamir] President Mubarak and King Husayn will be in the United States while I am there, but meetings with them have nothing to do with geographical distance. If meetings are desired, both Mubarak and Husayn live here, very close to us. It depends on them; I am willing to meet with both of them. Foreign Minister Moshe Arens proposed that President Mubarak meet with me some time ago, but the president said this depended on my a priori acceptance of his positions. This is impossible.

[Bakhar] The Arabs of the territories believe we have grown weaker. Why is Israel being perceived in this light?

[Shamir] The Arabs do not understand democracy and have no regard for it. Whenever they hear or read about the different views in Israel, which express divergent notions on the PLO or political solutions in the region, they regard this as a manifestation of Israel's weakness and of chaos in the country, a sign of the Israeli leadership losing its grip. Naturally, this assessment of theirs is wrong, but this has always been the case. Thus they believe that if they continue to strike and attack, Israel will crumble. But this shall never be.

Peres on Palestinian State, Intelligence Report

TA2303165189 Tel Aviv Educational Television in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Interview with Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister, by Dan Margalit on 23 March—videorecorded]

[Text] [Margalit] Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister, 'Aqiva Eldar in today's HA'ARETZ enumerates the following concepts: an unofficial 1-year cease-fire; negotiations fashioned after the Geneva talks in 1973—which, as we remember, you later dubbed an international opening; and, in the final stage, the establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state. Is this your new plan, the plan you wish to present to the Cabinet after Yitzhaq Shamir returns from Washington? Are these the main principles of your doctrine?

[Peres] No. I have not proposed a Palestinian state, and I am at present certainly not ready to go into detail on how I believe things should be done. The central issue here is the Palestinian state, however, and I made no such proposal, either orally or in writing.

[Margalit] Some people may not remember this, but I do. Allow me to tell you that 5 days ago, in a MA'ARIV article by Yosef Harif, the issue was stated in a more cautious manner. What he said there was that you are in favor of a political Palestinian entity with the attributes of a state. Is this the essence of your outlook?

[Peres] Yosef Harif writes about me without consulting me. Therefore, anything he writes is of his own free creation, in no way does it obligate me.

[Margalit] Are you at present unwilling to state the principles of your doctrine?

[Peres] I have said what I oppose: I have ruled out the Palestinian state. As for the rest, I have said that I will wait for Mr Shamir to return from the United States.

[Margalit] Your having a political plan indicates that you are not wholly satisfied with what is called the Rabin plan.

[Peres] As for the various elements of the Rabin plan, we proposed them before the Knesset elections. I would like to remind you that on the eve of the Knesset elections, we held a news conference, attended by both Yitzhaq Rabin and me, in which we came out with a 4-year plan. One of that plan's main clauses were free political elections in the territories. I still support this clause.

[Margalit] This is bound to be one of the basic principles of your plan.

[Peres] I will not talk about my plan. I merely saw it necessary to deny something that is not there.

[Margalit] At the Jewish Solidarity Conference, you spoke of a Benelux-type solution. What the press is saying today is that two armies will guarantee security in, say, three regions. This probably means that the Israel Defense Forces and the Jordanian Army will bear responsibility for security from east of the Jordan River, through Judaea and Samaria, and in the State of Israel.

[Peres] The same can be said about autonomy. What is autonomy all about? What is the great difference between the Palestinian entity you have mentioned and autonomy? Autonomy, too, means a Palestinian entity. It does matter, however, whether it is a state with an army, or whether it is not a state and does not have an army.

The central point that is vital to us in those parts of the territories which are densely populated by Arabs is security. This is our argument. Even the Likud no longer speaks of Biblical rights, although I do not deny they exist. Therefore, if the issue of security can be settled—and this is not the first time I have said this, you have known me for many years; with me, this concept of a Benelux-style federation or confederation dates back 25 years, if you wish. [sentence incomplete as heard]

[Margalit] To have this idea accepted, Jordan must consent to play a central role in future contacts. Recently, however, everyone has been saying that there is no Jordanian option.

[Peres] There is no Jordanian option.

[Margalit] The Likud is the only one saying there is a Jordanian option, but you said they have missed the boat.

[Peres] There is no Jordanian option, but Jordan has a part to play. Jordan has not disappeared from the Middle East. We must differentiate between the Jordanian option and Jordan's role. Jordan remains our immediate neighbor along a very long border. Both Jordan and Israel have no choice but to reach some sort of settlement, both in security and a territorial-geographical one.

[Margalit] One newspaper quoted you as saying that you believe the United States advised us in advance of its conditions for a dialogue with the PLO, and that we agreed to them. If those conditions have been met, we should have no grounds for complaint against the United States for holding talks with the PLO in Tunis.

[Peres] True. In the 1974 agreement with Kissinger, the United States said it would not hold talks with the PLO unless the latter accepts Resolutions 242 and 338, ceases hostile activities, and recognizes the existence of the State of Israel. That was the U.S. stand, to which we gave our consent. The present argument is whether the PLO has in fact met the U.S. conditions.

[Margalit] Has it?

[Peres] In my opinion, not all of them. For instance, it has not met the terms as far as terror is concerned.

[Margalit] I still do not understand whether you hold the dialogue with the PLO against the United States.

[Peres] I would have preferred it had the United States held talks with the PLO only after the PLO fulfilled what it had undertaken. The fact is that terror continues. I would not compromise on this point.

[Margalit] Has the United States then broken its agreement with us in launching talks with the PLO when it did?

[Peres] We differ on the interpretation of that agreement. I hope you are not after me to set up an inquiry commission into the issue of the United States—which, I know, is fashionable these days.

[Margalit] It is the Labor Party that probably wishes to set up an inquiry into you.

[Peres, laughing] All right. They do not inquire into the issue of the United States, however. There are differences of opinion between us, but I have heard even Mr Arens say that he had not suggested that the Americans stop their talks with the PLO. Saying that, he has in fact ended the argument.

[Margalit] A report published today, as well as the MA'ARIV article of 5 days ago, states that you have a plan that you intend to present after Mr Shamir's return from the United States. You yourself have also said the same. My question is: Why not present it to the Cabinet now, in order to enable Shamir to take it to the United States?

[Peres] I will present it to Mr Shamir, not to the Cabinet, because I think that if it is publicized, it may interfere with his trip—or at least be used as an alleged interference. I believe that despite my views, it is my duty to enable Mr Yitzhaq Shamir, who is the prime minister, to travel to the United States under the most favorable conditions possible.

[Margalit] But by the very statement that you have a plan, you announce your disagreement with him.

[Peres] I have a plan and he has one. If he can get his plan accepted, fine, very good. If the Arabs consent to give in on the question of what Resolution 242 is from the point of view of territory, and on other points, I will simply be glad. I believe, however, that this is not about to happen. At the same time, I believe it is my duty—despite all the criticism and fuss over the issue—to enable Mr Shamir to leave under the best conditions possible. It is a fact known to anyone in the world who is interested in Israel's stands that the Labor Party's plan differs from that of the Likud. We have not become Likud members.

[Margalit] In the government guidelines, however, you agreed on a government plan.

[Peres] We did not agree on a government plan, merely on basic guidelines. We did that knowing—as did the Likud—that we are willing to accept a territorial compromise. We have not shied away from our stands, and we adhere to our support for Resolutions 242 and 338. All these are well-known facts.

[Margalit] Is it possible that persons close to you have leaked the fact that you have a plan and that you yourself have announced having a plan without imparting its contents—all this in order to make it clear to world Jewry that despite the Solidarity Conference, Israel is not united on its political plan?

[Peres] First of all, anyone who has listened to Shamir and to me knows that there are two doctrines. As an orderly state, we allow one doctrine to be tested while knowing that two exist. Have we become a classified document? Is the State of Israel a classified document? It is an open, democratic country.

[Margalit] Then the solidarity is artificial, faked.

[Peres] The solidarity with Israel is genuine. Both Shamir and the Labor Party said in the news conference that the Solidarity Conference had not dealt with any specific subject, but was held as a manifestation of support for the State of Israel as it is, without taking a stand on the ongoing political argument. I believe this is indeed how it should have been.

[Margalit] I would like to ask you about the document submitted by the Intelligence Branch.

[Peres] We will talk about it later. Look, the air is full of plans. The Jordanian issue is probably finished, it cannot be denied that the PLO has changed, and there is the intifadah [uprising]. To some extent, everyone is stuttering. Do you know what the Likud stand is? If, for instance, it is true, that the heads of the Likud—Mr Shamir or Mr Arens—said that they are willing to talk with PLO people in the territories, then it is obvious that the wall separating us is becoming increasingly thin and transparent. The nation is currently holding a general inquiry. It is therefore not surprising that everyone is trying to attribute this or another viewpoint to others. We are at a turning point.

[Margalit] In the confusion you have presented, there is the matter of the Intelligence Branch's document which, as Yitzhaq Rabin has said, makes no recommendations, but does present a situation in which it will be difficult to end the intifadah without negotiating with the PLO. Do you share this stand? Is this your view?

[Peres] My view is that the Intelligence Branch should provide intelligence, the political echelons should provide opinions. It should not task the Intelligence Branch with anything. One must form one's views on the basis of information. The Intelligence Branch supplies information pertaining mainly to developments in the camp of the adversary or the enemy, and it is up to us to make the decisions.

[Margalit] Is it possible, in your opinion, to end the intifadah without finding some way to hold a dialogue with the PLO, which both you and the Intelligence Branch have described as having changed recently?

[Peres] I believe it is impossible to conclude the conflict between us and the Palestinians in any way but through a political solution, through negotiations. The PLO is an organization and the Palestinians are a nation. Negotiations should be held with a nation. I believe there are enough ways to overcome the administrative obstacles on our path to a solution.

[Margalit] Without the PLO?

[Peres] Is the PLO and the Palestinian people one and the same? What is the PLO? An organization.

[Margalit] This is the organization which—according to the Intelligence Branch—the Palestinians view as their representative.

[Peres] If you want to go into all this, let us take a look at the present complex situation. The problem is this: Who does the PLO represent? Is it the Palestinian exile or the residents of the territories? If, as it claims, it represents the Palestinian exile, then the largest number of exiled Palestinians live in Jordan. Does the PLO represent the Palestinians in Jordan? It is important to know whether it does or not. The reason we favored a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation was because we wish to negotiate with all the Palestinians. If the PLO represents residents of the territories only, these residents should be allowed to determine who their representatives are to be.

[Margalit] It seems that the political plan is one of the reasons for the difficulties, or crisis, which the Labor Party is currently undergoing. Last night, Yitzhaq Rabin spoke vehemently against the doves; Yosi Beilin spoke of the need to launch a dialogue with the PLO; and Shahal, Ya'aqobi, and Gur have announced their intention to run against you for the Labor Party chairmanship and for first place on the party's list in the next Knesset

elections. The elections are not until 1992, but they have announced their candidacy now, creating a permanent state of rivalry with you. Shahal has proposed setting up an inquiry commission into the party's failure in the recent elections. I would like to understand: Under the present conditions, which we have only briefly described, do you believe you can continue leading the party in the Cabinet and among the public?

[Peres] Hearing your questions, one might think I am a man who has been spoiled over the past 12 years and who is being spoiled no longer. I act under extremely difficult conditions constantly, both from the inside and the outside. I did not panic in the past and I do not panic now. In no way do I see this as a personal issue. I believe in my way. Sometimes I myself confuse the doves and the hawks. I was close to David Ben-Gurion. What was he, a dove or a hawk? Ben-Gurion was in favor of partitioning the country. Does this mean he was a dove, or a hawk?

[Margalit] I believe we will have to suspend this question, Mr Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister. I think in a few minutes you will experience a stormy and perhaps difficult political time in a Labor Party Bureau meeting. Thank you very much.

[Peres] You are welcome.

Peres to Party: Challenge Now or Wait for 1992

TA2303192089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Finance Minister Shim'on Peres has called on those who want to challenge him for the Labor Party's leadership post to do so today or wait until 1992. He was speaking at a stormy meeting of the party's leadership bureau. Le'a Zinder reports from Tel Aviv:

Shim'on Peres said to critics in his party, anyone who wants to challenge his leadership must do so today or else wait until 1992. I cannot accept a situation, he said, in which people announce that they will challenge me 1 and ½ years from now, and so undermine my leadership.

Peres told the leadership bureau: I am guilty. He said he accepts full responsibility for the failures of the Labor Party in the elections, but all the elected representatives of the party must accept that responsibility as well, he said.

Energy Minister Moshe Shahal demanded a commission of inquiry into the party's electoral failures. He said the results of the elections showed total organizational, intellectual, and leadership disarray in the party. [passage omitted]

'Different Message' Found in Intelligence Report

TA2403080489 Tel Aviv THE NATION in English 24 Mar 89 pp 1, 2

[Report by Avi Mossman]

[Text] Jerusalem—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is convinced that the staff of his deputy, Finance Minister Shim'on Peres, was behind last week's leak claiming an intelligence report stated the intifadah [uprising] would continue indefinitely unless Israel began talks with the PLO which, according to the leak, has undergone far-reaching transformations. However, the national intelligence assessment, whose highlights were informally read to last week's cabinet meeting by Major General Amnon (Lipkin) Shahaq, had a very different message:

—Israel's military measures have gradually dampened the intifadah, stretching the time between waves of violence, but that a complete halt of violence will probably not occur unless there is a political solution;

—The PLO (including Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah group) has increased its military operations against Jewish targets in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, though Fatah has changed its "declarative posture" and refrained from direct attacks from Lebanon;

—Most Palestinians regard the PLO as their symbolic representative.

"The central faction of the PLO has softened some of its declarative postures vis-a-vis the State of Israel," records the cabinet protocol citing the intelligence report. But the report, prepared by the intelligence branch of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], also makes it clear that the PLO attacks have increased dramatically since 'Arafat's December appearances in Geneva and Stockholm, which led to the official start of the PLO-U.S. dialogue.

Another intelligence assessment prepared by the Foreign Ministry's highly secret research section also found that Fatah had changed its tone to non-Arabic speaking audiences, while continuing to insist on the complete "right of return" for all Palestinians, and other basic core positions in the PLO Charter. The secretive Shamir, who once served as European chief of the Mosad, refused to declassify portions of the IDF intelligence assessment, even though it would prove the leak from the cabinet was deliberate distortion. Shamir also opposed the release of the second intelligence finding prepared by civilian sources. "Shamir doesn't believe in releasing documents," said one Shamir aide, who recalled Shamir's behavior in the General Security Services [GSS] scandal, when he refused to publicly deny charges, made by the deposed GSS chief Avraham Shalom, that Shamir had authorized killing captured Arab terrorists. A commission of inquiry subsequently backed up Shamir's version.

Both Maj Gen Ehud Baraq and Maj Gen 'Amram Mitzna' told visiting world Jewish leaders this week that Israel had achieved slow but sure success in dampening the Palestinian rioting. "The overall situation is much more under control than it was six or eight months ago," declared Baraq, the deputy chief-of-staff and former military intelligence chief. "There are no more mass demonstrations, and there is a sharp decrease in the use of molotov cocktails," asserted Baraq. "We are advancing gradually to our aim, and we will eventually achieve it," insisted Baraq, acknowledging that "it's a long struggle, and we cannot pinpoint exactly when it will end." He also said the IDF believed Palestinian violence

would continue to taper off when West Bankers and Gazans "realize that there is no chance to lessen Israel's grip on the areas under Israeli control."

The comments by Baraq, Mitzna', and the Gaza military governor Brigadier General Arye (Shiffman) Ramot all contradict the contentions of the leak that supposedly came from the IDF intelligence report. Shamir's key aides—Yosef Ben-Aharon and Avi Pazner—along with Minister Ehud Olmert, said Shamir's comments that the leak was a "complete lie" did not mean that Shamir wanted to deny the existence of an IDF intelligence assessment, but that its findings had been distorted beyond recognition.

Mosad Report Viewed as 'Less Unequivocal'

TA2403145389 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Mar 89 pp 1, 6

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent 'Uzi Mahanaymi and military correspondent Dani Sade]

[Text] A periodical evaluation report was submitted by the Mosad for the first time this year. This report is in addition to the Intelligence Branch's situation analysis that has been exposed to the media over the past week.

The periodical evaluation of the situation drawn up by the Mosad's research department was submitted to the prime minister some time ago.

It has been learned that the Mosad researchers' conclusions on the PLO and the uprising in the territories are less unequivocal than those set out in the report by the Intelligence Branch.

The Mosad's research department was expanded in the wake of the Agranat committee's findings after the Yom Kippur war. The department nevertheless failed to meet expectations, and the evaluations prepared by its directors fell far below the standards of similar evaluations formulated by the Intelligence Branch.

A senior security source said yesterday that media reports on the Intelligence Branch analysis of the Arab-PLO position, according to which no political breakthrough is possible without PLO participation, are harmful to relations between Israel and the United States.

Likud, Alignment Agree on Settlement Budget

TA2403091489 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 89 p 20

[Report by Joshua Brilliant]

[Excerpt] Tel Aviv—Likud and Labour MKs [Knesset Members] have agreed that next year's state budget will include a NIS [new Israeli shekels] 35 million allocation for strengthening existing West Bank and Gaza settlements and for establishing new ones.

The agreement, worked out between MK Ari'el Weinstein, who heads the Likud faction in the Knesset Finance Committee, the committee's chairman MK Mikha Harish, and the coordinator of the Alignment faction MK Hayim Ramon, says that the money will be taken from the reserve fund and added to the Housing Ministry's budget.

Housing Minister David Levi and Finance Minister Shim'on Peres are to decide by May 15 how this money will be spent.

The statement that some of the money will go to strengthening *existing* [preceding word in italics as published] settlements was designed to avoid criticism of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in the U.S. had all the money been earmarked for establishing new settlements, a well informed source told THE JERUSALEM POST last night. [passage omitted]

SLA Denies 'Awn Request To Shell Junblatt

TA2403061589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Several aid requests addressed by the Christians in Beirut to General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army [SLA], have been categorically rejected by SLA headquarters. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht has learned that Michel 'Awn, the Christian prime minister of Lebanon, asked the SLA to shell positions held by Walid Junblatt's Druze militia. The Druze fired hundreds of shells at the Christian quarters in Beirut this week. Here is a report by our correspondent Hayim Hecht:

[Begin recording] A senior officer in the Israeli army's liaison unit with Lebanon said last night: We have heard this song before. Gen 'Awn knows very well that these are new times and new tunes. We are definitely out of the picture. Gen Lahd has not yet completely recovered from the assassination attempt against him. His vocal cords, which were hurt in the attack, are not yet strong enough to even release a sharp communique denouncing the Syrians. Hence, all the Christian requests for aid have been rejected, in view of the categorical Israeli stance. [passage omitted] [end recording]

100,000 Lebanese Christians Reported Fleeing

TA2303173689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Some 100,000 Christian refugees who escaped from the battles in the north have arrived in southern Lebanon since the start of the week, our correspondent Hayim Hecht was told by UN Interim Force in Lebanon headquarters. UN officers said that the refugees do not need any assistance so far, as they have found shelter with relatives. The South Lebanese Army has toughened up searches at crossing points from northern Lebanon into the security zone.

Nigerian Official's 'Secret Visit' Presages Ties

TA2403091189 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 89 p 1

[Report by Kenneth Kaplan]

[Excerpts] A senior Nigerian official is to complete a secret visit to Israel today, THE JERUSALEM POST has learned. During the visit it is understood that a number of bilateral agreements were concluded with the West African state, presaging formal resumption of full diplomatic relations in the near future. No official confirmation was received late last night from Israeli officials.

Nigeria, the most important state in West Africa, has been reported to be edging toward a resumption of diplomatic ties which it severed in 1973 in the wake of the Yom Kippur War. Several other important African states have recently taken that step. [passage omitted]

Senior government officials in Nigeria are said to be pressing for a full and speedy restoration of ties, arguing that the rupture is no longer tenable given the PLO's recognition of Israel.

Arens Tells Knesset PLO Stepping Up Violence

TA2403090189 Tel Aviv THE NATION in English 24 Mar 89 p 18

[Report by James Levene]

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens yesterday told the Knesset that since the U.S. began its dialogue with the PLO it has intensified a campaign of terrorism. "Terrorism on the Northern border continues," Arens said, "not only on the part of Ahmad Jibril's organization, but also on the part of those organizations which belong to the PLO and ostensibly accept 'Arafat's authority, and were present in Algiers when the resolutions (to accept Israel's existence and renounce terrorism) were adopted."

Arens said the frequency of penetration attempts on the Northern border is higher than it has been for many years, "and there is not one Knesset member who does not know what the result would be if, God forbid, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] did not manage to stop these penetrations and they succeed in entering Zar'it or any other settlement on the Northern border." Arens said the PLO is now stepping up violence in Israel and the territories against Jews and Palestinians. He cited this week's fatal stabbing of an elderly Jew in Tel Aviv and the murder of a 34-year-old Palestinian nurse in Gaza. "What did she do wrong? Arens asked. [no closing quotation marks as published] "Apparently it was suspected that she was not prepared to comply with 100 percent of the orders which the PLO's people bring to the territories." [passage omitted]

PFLP Activists Threaten Nabulus Figures

TA2403092389 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 89 pp 1, 14

[Report by Joel Greenberg]

[Excerpts] Masked activists of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine burst into homes of six prominent PLO-backers in Nabulus this week and warned them at knife-point to stop their meetings with Israelis and foreign diplomats or risk assassination, informed sources in the city said last night.

The incidents reflected growing tensions between radicals and supporters of the mainstream Fatah group in the PLO regarding recent meetings between Palestinians and Israelis.

Radical groups have denounced the contacts in graffiti messages in the West Bank, and a PFLP spokesman in Damascus this week reportedly condemned the dialogue between local Palestinians and Israelis, saying all contacts should be made through the PLO leadership abroad.

According to the reports from Nabulus, masked youths entered the homes of six prominent figures in Nabulus who are known to support the PLO. The names of five were disclosed: Basil Kan'an, a businessman; Dr. Hatim Abu Ghazalah, a former city councillor; Dr. Samih Taqtaq, director of St. Luke's Hospital; Dr. Husan 'Abd al-Hadi, a member of the board of trustees of Al-Najah University, and Ibrahim 'Abd al-Hadi, chairman of the board of the Arab Insurance Company. [passage omitted]

In another development, a leaflet distributed in Nabulus this week presented a religious legal opinion (fatwa) stating that the PLO's support for a two-state solution and its recognition of Israel are consistent with Islamic law.

The leaflet is signed by "The Preaching and Guidance Committee/The Conquerors—Victory Squadrons/The Palestinian Popular Army."

"Our beloved Messenger (the prophet Muhammad) reached a settlement with (the tribe of) Kuraysh, which had evicted him from his home and forced him to live outside Mecca. He reached a settlement with them in exchange for peace, they did not return his house nor any part of his residence, and the terms of agreement appeared to favour Kuraysh. Nevertheless, he reconciled with them, and was inclined to peace.

"The position adopted by the Palestinian leadership: that it recover part of Palestine and establish a state on it, and recognize Israel in the remaining part, is indeed a great position, in accordance with Islamic law, to be recorded by history as a brilliant page in the annals of the struggle of this wise leadership."

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

1 Killed by Explosive Charge

TA2403103289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] A young man was killed in the village of Silwan in East Jerusalem. According to local residents, an explosive charge blew up in his hands. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the incident took place 2 days ago, but only today was it reported that 23-year-old Muhammad 'Aziz Nasir was transferred in serious condition to Al-Maqasid Hospital, where he died of his wounds.

A spokesman for the Police Southern District refused to comment on any details related to the affair, and hospital staff were also asked not to discuss the matter with journalists.

Firebomb Thrown Near Nazareth

TA2403101989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] A firebomb was thrown at a private car driving from Kefar Hahoresh to Yafa, on the western outskirts of Nazareth, but there were no casualties. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the firebomb was thrown from a hill near the road, but it missed the car and ignited in a nearby field.

12 Injured in 23 Mar Incidents

TA2403093689 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Mar 89 pp 1, 2

[Report by Joel Greenberg and Mikhal Sela']

[Excerpts] In the West Bank yesterday, troops raided at least 10 villages and arrested wanted youths, setting off clashes in which 12 persons were reported wounded by gunfire. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] confirmed four casualties.

In Janin, three persons were reported wounded. [passage omitted]

The Civil Administration said it had released 150 Palestinian prisoners from West Bank jails, in response to requests by community leaders in recent meetings with the head of the Civil Administration, Tat-Aluf [Brigadier General] Shay Erez.

Tulkarm, its refugee camp, and neighbouring Dhannabah remained under curfews imposed Wednesday after heavy rioting. [passage omitted]

Mikhal Sela' adds:

Nine people were shot and wounded yesterday in what nevertheless was one of the quietest days in the Gaza Strip in recent weeks. The military authorities lifted the curfew imposed three days ago on refugee camps and residents reportedly thronged the streets to go shopping. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0730 GMT on 24 March reports that "the IDF has clamped a curfew on the Al-Mughazi refugee camp southeast of Gaza in the wake of yesterday's disturbances."]

Tulkarm Youth Dies of Wounds

TA2403125189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Marwan Abu Tamam, an 18-year-old Arab youngster, died today at Tel Hashomer Hospital of wounds he sustained 2 days ago during riots in Tulkarm. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that curfews remain in effect in Tulkarm and the adjacent refugee camp. Early this morning, a curfew was also clamped on the town of Qabatiyah in Samaria in the wake of disturbances.

AL-SHA'B Editor Sentenced

TA2403153089 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] Jerusalem—Yesterday the Ramallah military court issued a 1-year prison sentence and a 2-year suspended sentence against colleague Salah al-Zuhayka, editor of AL-SHA'B and member of the Arab journalists association board of directors. He was charged with being an organizer of the "Fatah" movement political wing.

It is worth noting that colleague Al-Zuhayka was detained on 3 September 1988. He was defended by lawyer Ibrahim Nassar.

Al-Rifa'i on Suspension of UK Aircraft Sale

JN2303130589 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1226 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Zayd al-Rifa'i, Jordanian prime minister and defense minister, has told us that Jordan has decided, in view of Jordan's current financial situation, to discontinue talks and negotiations to finalize a deal to purchase eight Tornado aircraft. Al-Rifa'i added that Jordan recently informed the British Government of this decision and its hope to resume the negotiations in the future under more propitious circumstances. He said Britain expressed its understanding of the situation and agreed to Jordan's request.

Al-Rifa'i recalled that Jordan had obtained the British Government's approval for the sale of these planes to Jordan. It had also obtained the approval of the FRG, Italian, and U.S. governments because these states participate in manufacturing the aircraft or in providing certain equipment for them. Al-Rifa'i said that an initial agreement was then reached on the conditions of sale, financing, prices, the technical aspects of the aircraft, training, and maintenance. Negotiations between the two governments were direct and the purchase terms were excellent from Jordan's standpoint. Al-Rifa'i said the deal would not have any impact on the Jordanian budget because it contains a 5-year grace period after which the price of the planes will be paid at a fixed interest rate in annual installments over 10 years. However, he added that not signing the deal means that Jordan will not be committed to pay the premium of new future debts.

Paper Says U.S. Out To 'Liquidate' 'Uprising'

JN2403073189 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Mar 89 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Between the Intifadah and Political Dialogue"]

[Text] It has now become clear that Washington wants to convert the intifadah [uprising] in the occupied territories into political dialogue. This was disclosed by the U.S. ambassador in Tunis during his recent talks with the PLO representative. In other words, Washington wants to liquidate the intifadah and force the Palestinians to replace it with political dialogue. No one knows why Washington does not, at the same time, demand a liquidation of the occupation in the West Bank and Gaza and its replacement with a similar dialogue!

The intifadah has never been a bargaining chip for political dialogue. It has always been a legitimate resistance movement to liberate the usurped Palestinian land and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their national rights on it. Therefore, the intifadah is clearly a Palestinian weapon. It is not logical for Washington to demand that Palestinians lay down their weapon only to become a party to a political dialogue.

Dialogue is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end; it may or may not succeed. The intifadah is a successful way of winning international support for the Palestinian cause. It has achieved near unanimity on the need to convene an international peace conference. There is no conflict between these two approaches. Washington entered into a dialogue with the Vietnamese while the war was raging; it did not ask the Vietnamese to stop fighting as the price for the dialogue.

It would be better if Washington worked to expedite the convening of the international conference and made efforts to force Israel to accept and join it. The conference is the true way to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestine question and restore peace in the region. This is much more useful than the attempt to liquidate the intifadah and portray the dialogue as an end in itself.

The Palestinian people, it should be remembered, are too knowledgeable to be lured into isolated, unilateral and unequal negotiations. Washington should realize this. The Palestinian people are certain that the international conference is the only thing that can point the peace process in the right direction. They cannot possibly abandon this idea and the intifadah in return for a political dialogue with Washington or Tel Aviv.

The United States should accept that the peace process in the region cannot be monopolized by any superpower. The United States itself cannot support the process alone even if it succeeded in tempting the Palestinian people to abandon the international conference. Moreover, it can be truthfully said that the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue will not lead to the liquidation of the intifadah in spite of U.S. hopes. We repeat that U.S. credibility is being tested. Washington must demonstrate its credibility not by demanding the conversion of the intifadah into a political dialogue, but through the speedy convening of the international conference.

King Husayn Telephones YAR's 'Adballah Salih

JN2303125889 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] This afternoon, His Majesty King Husayn had a telephone conversation with 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Yemen Arab Republic [YAR]. The two leaders exchanged views on a number of pan-Arab issues of interest to the two fraternal countries.

Satellites Reportedly Monitor Hostage Movements

NC2403084789 Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 13-19 Mar 89 p 66

[From "The Last Movement" feature]

[Text] It has been revealed that one satellite is positioned over Beirut and another one over Al-Biqa'. Both are monitoring the movement of foreign hostages and their kidnappers after sensitive equipment was accurately and successfully placed in the area where they are located.

'Religious Official' To Intervene for Hostages

NC2403085789 Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 13-19 Mar 89 p 66

[From "The Last Moment" feature]

[Text] Early last week meetings were held on the issue of the hostages between a religious official in the southern suburb [not further identified] and non-Lebanese security officials. The religious official promised that he would personally intervene to have the hostages released very soon.

Islamic Group Reportedly Has Stinger Missiles

NC2403092489 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 27 Mar 89 p 7

[Text] A source who said that he is very close to an Islamic group has sent the following report to AL-SHIRA':

An Islamic group that is hostile to one of the Middle Eastern countries has obtained two shoulder-fired Stinger missiles with a launcher. The two missiles arrived in Lebanon through one of the embassies, which has paid part of the exorbitant price given by the group to one party that has such U.S.-made missiles. The report adds that this group is trying to smuggle the two missiles out of Lebanon.

Nine U.S. Officers Withdraw From Al-Yarzah

NC2303180789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Citing a knowledgeable ministerial source in Beirut, the AL-ITTIHAD newspaper of Abu Dhabi reports that the U.S. Administration has decided to withdraw the nine American officers who are working in the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah. The decision was made after two of these officers were wounded during clashes last week.

The paper adds that the U.S. ambassador notified [General Michel] 'Awn of this decision two days ago, setting Monday as the deadline for the officers' departure, should the military flareup persist.

RFL on Departure

NC2403171989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] The team of U.S. military experts left the Defense Ministry in Al-Yarzah today. A U.S. Embassy spokesman in Beirut said that the measure is within the framework of reducing the number of embassy staff members given the current circumstances.

The U.S. Defense Department today strongly denied reports that two U.S. officers working in the Lebanese-U.S. liaison office in Al-Yarzah had been injured.

Clashes Between Army, Occupation Forces Continue

Beirut Area 'Temporarily' Closed

NC2103103389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Statement issued by Major General Sami al-Khatib's Army Command Guidance Directorate on 21 March]

[Text] In light of the Al-Yarzah [Defense Ministry] Command's decision to abolish the security committee and in light of the military flareup on the contact lines, the triangle composing the Museum, Al-Barbir, and the Franciscan areas is considered unsafe. It has been closed temporarily to protect citizens' lives.

'Violent Clashes' on Combat Lines

NC2303152389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1448 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Violent clashes, in which artillery and rockets are being used, have raged along the combat lines of 'Ayn al-Rummanah, Badaru, Al-Tayyunah, Dar al-Kitab, and Al-Masalih since 1600 today. Meanwhile, fighting is currently raging along the lines of the old commercial markets. Six shells, including two RPG shells, fell on the outskirts of Al-Ashrafiyah between 1600 and 1640. Furthermore, the areas of Al-Dikwanah and Salome were struck by a number of shells, killing three people. In a similar development, intermittent clashes involving the use of artillery pieces are currently taking place along the combat lines of Suq al-Gharb and 'Aytat. Three mortar shells landed on Army positions in Suq al-Gharb at 1625, and a number of shells landed on Al-Qammatiyah.

VOL Updates Casualties

NC2303181989 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The war against East Beirut is continuing for the 2d consecutive day. Intermittent shelling is reported on the traditional combat lines in Beirut, the southern suburb, and the mountain. Shelling also is reported in Al-Matn, Al-Ashrafiyah, and Kisrawan. Thus far, six people have been killed and nine injured. The injured are being treated in East Beirut hospitals. [passage omitted]

According to security sources, Syrian forces placed rocket launchers and a field gun in an empty plot in Al-Hamra'. Two other rocket launchers were placed near the Hotels area [in West Beirut]. [passage omitted]

In yesterday's shelling, 16 people were killed and 63 others were injured. In the past 10 days, 61 people have been killed and over 225 have been injured.

Prime Minister Michel 'Awn will discuss the current developments at a news conference in B'abda Palace at 1100 tomorrow.

Clashes 'Rage' in Mountain Area

NC2303182189 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Violent clashes involving the use of artillery pieces and rockets continue to rage along the mountain combat lines, particularly in 'Alayh, Ra's al-Jabal, Shimlan, and Al-Ma'rufiyah. Al-Ghabun was treacherously bombarded a short while ago, prompting nationalist forces to return the fire and destroy several artillery emplacements which had directed their fire at residential areas.

Explosions Reported in W. Beirut

NC2403064789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Two explosions took place in West Beirut last night. The first occurred at about 1920 on Al-Sadat Street and wounded three people. The second took place at 2025 in the Concorde Building, a few meters from a Syrian occupation forces' roadblock. In another development, a group of the Shaykh Subhi al-Salih forces has claimed responsibility for an attack just before 1900 yesterday. Using hand grenades, it attacked a Syrian occupation forces' position in West Beirut's Al-Quraytim area, near the corner sports club.

Shells Fall Near Sinn al-Fil

NC2403123389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Despite the relative calm which has prevailed on all the combat lines since this morning, three shells fell on the outskirts of Sinn al-Fil just before 1300 today. Another shell had fallen in the Museum area earlier. Clashes took place at 1150 today on the combat lines of Al-Shiyah, 'Ayn al-Rummanah, and Al-Tayyunah during which a number of shells fell in neighboring areas.

VOL Updates Security Situation

NC2403175789 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] The Army positions in the mountain came under shellfire at 1500, just as Beirut Port was targeted by a number of rounds. In the mountain, violent clashes developed as of 1730 when battles involving various weapons broke out along the combat lines of Suq al-Gharb, 'Aytat, and Dahr al-Wahsh. The hostile artillery emplacements then expanded the scope of their attacks. The Army began returning fire as of 1815 against the hostile emplacements located in Ra's al-Jabal, Tallat al-Shatra, 'Abd al-Jalil, Shimlan, the western quarters, and Bshamun. Our correspondent has learned that the Army managed to score a direct hit on a 57-mm machinegun emplacement in Ra's al-Jabal, destroying it and inflicting casualties among its crew members.

The attacks were also directed at the residential areas in southern al-Matn. Shells were also directed at B'abda, Bitshay, al-Hadath, al-Antuniyah, Bsaba, Blaybil, Humal, Kafr Shima, Bsus, al- Jumhur, 'Arayya, and al-Kahhalah. According to the latest security report, violent fighting has been raging along the combat lines of al-Shuwayfat, Kafr Shima, Al-Ma'rufiyah, 'Aytat, Suq al-Gharb, 'Alayh, Dahr al-Wahsh, Al-'Abbadiyah, and Shwit.

Meanwhile, fighting is also raging along the combat lines of Al-Tayyunah, Dar al-Kitab, Mazda Circle, Al-Matahin, the museum, al-Barbir, and Ra's al-Nab'. Rockets have fallen on both sides of the contact lines.

Reportage on Activity of South Lebanese Army

Resistance Attacks Patrol

NC2103161389 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] The resistance fighters last night attacked an agent's mechanized patrol east of Sidon with machineguns and rockets. One of the patrol cars was destroyed, and its occupants were killed and wounded. A landmine exploded today when an agent's vehicle was passing on the 'Azzuz-Jazzin road, killing and wounding three of its occupants.

2 Resistance Members Killed

NC2203181789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] According to security sources, two resistance fighters were martyred this afternoon in an attack against a position of Lahd agents in Hasbayya. The attack seriously wounded a member of the Lahd militias. The Israeli radio admitted the operation, saying that three resistance men were killed, and one Lahd militiaman was injured.

Unit Invades Shab'a Village

NC2303155389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Extreme tension prevails in the southern village of Shab'a following an incursion there by the agent Lahd militia.

Travelers from the village have reported that a unit comprising 50 militiamen commanded by agent Faris al-Hamra entered Shab'a, stormed the mosque, and used bullhorns to declare the establishment of a civil administration. They alledged that this was being done because of the inhabitants' wishes. The militiamen gave the names of the civil administration members, who are a group of Israeli agents.

When the imam of the village, Shaykh Mustafa al-Nahhal, confronted the aggressors, they beat and insulted him. They also beat the mukhtar of Shab'a, Haj Muhammad Salim al-Zuhayri. Then the inhabitants poured gasoline on the Shab'a municipality building and set it on fire after it was learned that the building would be used as the agent civil administration's headquarters. The militiamen arrested a number of the village inhabitants and took them to the Al-Khiyam detention center.

Hizballah Palestinians Killed

NC2303151989 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] It was learned today that three Palestinians belonging to Hizballah were killed near the border village of Hula when they tried to infiltrate into Israel yesterday. [Paris AFP in English at 1408 GMT in a related report says—"Three members of a Palestinian Islamic fundamentalist group were killed Wednesday as they tried to slip into Israel from southern Lebanon, anti-Israeli sources said Thursday.

The three commandos, all Sunni Moslems and members of Islamic al-Jama'ah, were killed by Israeli troops near the village of Hula, located on the Israeli-Lebanese border, the Islamic Resistance announced in a communique. Islamic al-Jama'ah (group) "plays a role" within Islamic Resistance, which is the military wing of the pro-Iranian Shi'ite movement Hizballah, according to an official of the Sunni group.

The Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) late Wednesday said its forces had killed three armed guerrillas as they were approaching the Israeli border near Hula.

The Islamic Resistance statement identified the three slain commandos as Muhammad Shibli, 18, Dib Hujayr, 22, and Samir Naji, 22, all from Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon. It said the guerrillas killed or wounded several Israelis in a five-hour confrontation involving 100 soldiers and 20 military vehicles."]

'Awn Holds News Conference, Criticizes Syria

NC2403120689 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn said in his press conference today: I have not declared a war of liberation against Syria. Syria has launched a war of occupation against Lebanon. A war of liberation is a war of the weak against the strong. Gen 'Awn is backed by the military, the people, and their determination. The world must help us because we believe in human rights and international charters. The Lebanese people can be reassured by our plans. For 14 years the life of these people has depended on Syria's mood. Crimes are being committed daily as if they are a normal part of life. If we wait until we are stronger, we will not be able to become stronger because the blows will be either economic or military.

Gen 'Awn said: The ports issue has harmed the interests of local leaders who are involved with the Syrians. This issue was an Arab and international demand to stop smuggling from the Lebanese coast. I have a consensus on the issue I am defending. We will not allow the state to die and remain without a president. Can reforms be achieved and presidential elections be held under the barrel of a gun? They have fired 3,000 shells which have burned the people's houses and livelihood. We have not declared a war of liberation on Syria but Syria is waging war against Lebanon.

The prime minister continued: The arrival of [Kuwaiti] Ambassador al-Jasim in Beirut has no connection with the ports issue and with calming the situation. The issue is that of Syria's withdrawal. Al-Jasim has come to finish consultations on the work of the six-member Arab committee.

Regarding the future phased steps, Prime Minister 'Awn said: They cannot be revealed through the media. Otherwise, the people will face a frenzied shelling. What is important is to defend the homeland, sovereignty, and identity. The price of all this is not cheap. We do not want other countries to take a stand; we want them to fulfill their promises and to fulfill what they voted for at the United Nations.

The prime minister added: Some think that we are enjoying peace under Syrian terms but do not know that our children are being killed by the shelling, or being butchered, and that they are shackling our freedoms. The Syrians are resorting to sudden shelling and are using delayed action shells that pierce walls and then explode. This is what occurred at the Defense Ministry. We will accept nothing less than the Syrian Army's withdrawal from Lebanon. There is no going back on this. We refuse to have the people's lives at the mercy of Syrian guns. We have the strength to defend Beirut. I have no fears about the results of the battle even through Syria is militarily stronger.

Regarding the siege, Gen 'Awn said: All of Lebanon, not only the eastern areas, is besieged. We are extending our hand to anyone, but I will not bet on anyone except the Lebanese issue. The world will become aware of this. Syria has been trying since 1975 to make the war an inter-Lebanese one. It is shelling the unarmed areas from its armed positions. No one can fire a single bullet without the Syrians' orders.

Gen 'Awn added: Reaching agreement with the other parties is always possible as long as no one denies the others' rights. We are only asking the great powers to

follow up the stands they have taken and to abide by them. The siege of the eastern areas has no effect and all commodities are reaching the citizens.

No Accord at 'Syrian Gunpoint'

NC2403183089 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister General 'Awn made it clear today that there will be no accord or understanding as long as the Syrian forces remain in Lebanon. We are strong enough to protect Beirut, he said, adding: There will be no backing down or reversal of the decision to liberate Lebanon. We will not accept that the Lebanese people should remain a target of Syrian bombardment. Agreement among the Lebanese is always possible if there is no interference.

Gen 'Awn reasserted that he would not accept anything short of the withdrawal of the Syrian Army from Lebanon. He declared: There will be no retreat and we will not accept that the people should remain at the mercy of Syrian guns. At a news conference today, he emphasized that we are strong enough to protect Beirut. I am not scared of the results of the battle, although Syria is militarily stronger.

Gen 'Awn began his news conference by stressing that he is not a Christian leader but a prime minister working for all Lebanese. He said: A price must be paid in a liberation war. If Beirut is destroyed by the Syrians, it will be rebuilt. True, the Syrians are stronger and are bringing in new rocket launchers and ammunition. But if they bombard and destroy Beirut, we will rebuild it.

Gen 'Awn expressed his readiness to accept help from any foreign party if the United States and Europe do not display sufficient concern over Lebanon. He reiterated that there will be no accord or understanding at Syrian gunpoint. Reforms and elections cannot be brought about through guns. He refused to link a possible Syrian withdrawal with a withdrawal of the Israeli Army from southern Lebanon, a condition that Damascus has repeatedly made. This demand is an invalid excuse, because Israel entered Lebanon in 1978, after the Syrian entry in 1976.

Gen 'Awn noted a shift in the stand of the international community, which has been indifferent to the Lebanese issue so far, out of a belief that Lebanon was enjoying Syrian peace. He also noted a shift in the stands of the United States, France, and the UN secretary general.

Asked about mediation efforts of the Kuwaiti envoy appointed by the Arab League, Gen 'Awn said: Our goal is not to achieve a truce, but Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon.

'Awn Sends Message to Al-Asad, Urges Withdrawal

NC2303173989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn has sent a formal message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad asking him to withdraw his Army from Lebanon. 'Awn handed copies of the message to the head of Lebanon's permanent bureau in Damascus, Ambassador Albert 'Asi, for delivery to Al-Asad, and to Kuwaiti Ambassador in Damascus Ahmad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Jasim, for delivery to Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, chairman of the Arab committee on Lebanon.

According to the CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY, the message contains a Lebanese request from Syria to withdraw its Army from Lebanon, to prepare a timetable for this withdrawal, and to inform the legitimate Lebanese authorities of this timetable.

According to the same news agency, Gen 'Awn sent copies of this message to U.S. President George Bush and UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar to inform them of the legitimate Lebanese authorities' stand on this subject. This way, the request for the Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon will not remain mere statements and declarations but will be in legal form.

'Nationalist' Parties Opt for Mobilization

NC2203192189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] The nationalist and progressive parties and forces have denounced the decision by 'Awn's clique to continue the escalation, to fan the fires of war, and to press ahead with their suicidal political program. This program aims at usurping power and blocking any solutions that may save the country and the people, bring about an end to the war, and build a democratic political system in which sectarianism is abolished, and justice is attained.

At a meeting today, the parties made the appropriate decisions to organize military confrontation in all areas and continue the implementation of mass mobilization. These measures, the parties said, were necessary in light of the recent moves [by 'Awn] which have ended any lingering doubts and reservations.

Criticize Arab League

NC2203191389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] Nationalist parties and forces have decided that the Arab [League Ministerial] committee continues to deviate from the norms of objectivity that should be followed in tackling the Lebanese crisis. The committee, having divided an earlier list of invitations into smaller groups, is now issuing invitations to traitors who have no political or representative weight and who took part in signing the document of treason with the Zionist occupation forces on 17 May 1983. Among these figures are

[former Prime Minister Shafiq] al-Wazzan, [former President Amin], al-Jummayil and [former Speaker of the Chamber of Deputy Kamil] al-As'ad.

The parties called on the Arab committee to reconsider this mistaken attitude which does not reflect a serious desire to help resolve the crisis.

Radio Commentary Reiterates Stand on Lebanon

JN2303145389 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The period preceding the bloody escalation in Lebanon has witnessed Arab efforts, which were supported by many Lebanese voices, calling for a process of reforms and constitutional elections that would achieve national reconciliation and allow Lebanon to enter a new phase of its national history. This is to be done with the participation, and consent, of every Lebanese party and will allow Lebanon to preserve its territorial unity, liberate the South, and play its Arab and international role.

While these efforts were advancing and reviving hopes of finding a solution to the difficult situation in Lebanon, the clique that is betting on the non-national alternative moved to bomb these positive signs and kill any chance of a solution. This clique also wants to focus hostility against Syria and entrench the contact and non-contact lines that are meant to divide Lebanon—territory and people.

The masks have completely fallen from the faces of this clique. Those who ignore the conditions of the previous 14 years in Lebanon—which have given sufficient proof that a solution can only be achieved by reforming the political system and that there can be no solution in Lebanon based on antagonizing and fighting Syria—cannot be objective in their assessment of the Lebanese situation, nor in their treatment of it. Therefore, they are not able, nor competent, to provide solutions acceptable to all Lebanese. Whoever wants a real and national solution in Lebanon must cooperate with Syria and be its friend. This is because friendship with Syria is in the interest of the whole of Lebanon, in the interest of finding a real Lebanese national reconciliation, and in the interest of keeping Lebanon united and with an effective role in its Arab surroundings.

Those who bet on empty plans and who derive courage from foreign forces that are hostile to Lebanon's unity, independence, and sovereignty, cannot twist the facts that are known near and far, inside and outside Lebanon.

The antagonism they display against Syria will not bring any benefit to Lebanon; nor will it serve the Lebanese national interest. It is clearly part of a policy hostile to Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabs, which puts Lebanon's destiny in question and throws it into the abyss of fragmentation, decay, and perpetual internecine fighting.

Strangely, the isolationist clique has not so far understood the facts created by the long years of the Lebanese crisis. These facts have unequivocally confirmed that Lebanon does not belong exclusively to a single Lebanese group and cannot, and will not, become monopolized by one group. But, rather, it belongs to all Lebanese; and no single Lebanese group can impose its will on the others—not by force, nor by claims. The time of privileges and superiority over all others have gone forever.

Any national, comprehensive solution must take into consideration the restoration of Lebanese unity; reform of the political order; and establishing legitimate, constitutional institutions. This solution should achieve justice and equality, eliminate sectarianism and privileges at the expense of others, and establish normal relations with the Arab countries, particularly Syria whose relations with Lebanon are based on factors of geography, history, and a common destiny as well as from shared national and pan-Arab interests.

Contrary to their claims, Syria has no ambitions in Lebanon. Syria looks at Lebanon from a pan-Arab standpoint. It is a fraternal country and the Lebanese are a fraternal people. Syria will continue to stand beside Lebanon, its unity, and Arabism. It is above their rancor, trivialities, and limited, narrow view.

Whoever claims for himself an authority and legitimacy that do not belong to him—like the the one who tried to extend his fist over the heads of others and began the escalation—is mistaken if he believes he can challenge the others and make them to submit to the challenge. Nobody has an immunity when encroachment is practiced. It does not matter who gives orders to torpedo the dialogue through shelling, missiles, war-like statements, and a gang mentality. What is important is this question: What comes after the shelling? What are its consequences, and of the deadlock created by the massacres and bloodshed?

Those who ignited the Lebanese situation and who ignore the Lebanese crisis will never find the way clear before them. Those who are not aware of the balance of power on the ground, or who do not take it into consideration, will commit a grave mistake and be burnt by the fire they started. Their arrogant adventure will lead them to suicide, which is always the fate of the killers and agents of the homeland's enemies who work against the people's interest.

Polish Defense Minister, Delegation Depart

JN2303164589 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 23 Mar (SANA)—Polish Defense Minister General Florian Siwicki and his delegation left Damascus today following a visit of several days to Syria.

Seeing him off at the airport were Gen Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister; senior General Command officers, and the Polish ambassador in Damascus.

Foreign Minister Returns From France Visit

JN2403070589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Paris—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has affirmed Syria's sincere intention to help the fraternal Lebanese people overcome their ordeal and end Lebanon's crisis. [passage omitted]

Al-Shar' and his delegation returned to Damascus this evening following an official visit to France at the invitation of French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

Prime Minister Chairs Meeting on Oil Affairs

JN2303190489 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi today chaired a meeting at the Oil Ministry to discuss the work, production, and projects being implemented by the Syrian Oil Company. The meeting was attended by Dr Antonios Habib, minister of oil and mineral wealth; Dr Nadir Nabulsi, assistant to the minister of oil and mineral wealth for oil affairs; Dr 'Ali Jubran, director general of the Syrian Oil Company; and several experts and technicians.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr Antonios Habib, minister of oil and mineral wealth, welcomed the prime minister and stressed the great care and attention paid by President Hafiz al-Asad and the government to the oil industry. He explained the importance of exploiting oil by national companies and local expertise. He also stressed the importance of promoting and enhancing work in this field.

The prime minister referred to the positive results achieved by the country in oil exploitation. He emphasized the task to implement the instructions of President Hafiz al-Asad and the resolutions of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party congresses in the exploitation of our natural resources. This must be done in a manner that entrenches and consolidates construction and development and makes distinct advances in our national economy.

The prime minister explained the importance of oil exploration and extraction projects by national companies and of promoting oil by self-reliance and high productive efficiency.

The prime minister praised the great results achieved in the field of national oil exploitation. He also praised the efforts exerted by those working in this vital economic sector. He explained the importance of coordination among various quarters working in the oil sector. He also explained the need to leave behind traditional practices and bureaucracy and to encourage inventive initiatives for productive and fruitful performance.

During the meeting, a review was made of the projects—already implemented and being implemented—by the Syrian Oil Company in exploration and enhancing oil fields in accordance with the set timetables and financial programs.

At the end of the meeting, recommendations were made to enhance work and production in the field of oil.

Afghanistan

Kabul-Mujahidin Fighting in Provinces, Kabul

Rebels Cut Off Roads to Kabul

BK2303141489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin have reportedly cut off almost all roads linking the capital, Kabul, with major cities of the country, and the Najibullah regime is maintaining only air contact with most of the 29 provincial capitals.

The Soviet newspaper PRAVDA said that the Kabul forces defending the eastern city of Jalalabad against a major mujahidin offensive are also depending on airplanes for supplies.

Attacks on Jalalabad Continue

LD2303154189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Extensive attacks on Jalalabad city by the armed extremist groups supported by the Pakistani Army troops and militia were foiled by the courageous units and companies, and the invading forces were pushed back in several directions. This has been a shameless and disgraceful defeat for the leaders of the armed opposition and their military backers. In the course of the attacks, there was a heavy loss of life too.

In order to prevent the revelation of the disgraceful failure of the invaders, the Pakistani Army and militia prevented the transfer of the dead and wounded and in some instances, under various means and pretexts, killed the wounded and burned their bodies in deserts or threw them in the river.

Eyewitnesses report that just today, Ruzaddin, a ringleader of an armed extremist group, in order to conceal realities in the fronts, threw 74 dead bodies into Kabul river. However, the relatives—fathers, mothers, and sisters of those killed—hoping to get the corpses of their beloved ones, went to Towr Kham, group after group, and displayed indignation and asked the leaders of extremists and of the Pakistani Army divisions 11 and 18 to return the bodies of their dead. The report adds that yesterday, hundreds of women came from camps in Peshawar to Towr Kham. While shouting loudly against war and murder, they demanded the whereabouts of their children and beloved ones. The Pakistani authorities and armed extremists linked to them, who did not have any answers to these cries, shamelessly opened fire on the women gathered there; 18 women were killed and a large number were wounded. The bodies of those killed were thrown into a ditch and, contrary to all humanitarian and Islamic norms, burried there.

The faithful and brave people of Afghanistan condemn this action by the armed opposition and of their Pakistani backers and consider it against all humanitarian and Islamic norms.

48 Rebels Killed in Sarowbi

LD2303182189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] A competent Armed Forces source says that in the last 24 hours the military situation in the majority of provinces and regions of the country were normal. The units and companies were deployed and continued their educational and combat readiness activities. Except in one or two provinces, there have been no major combat operations throughout the country. The Kabul-Hayratan highway is open. The flow of supply convoys continues normally.

The BIA military section reports that extremist elements under the protection of the Pakistani militarists fired heavy weapons at Herat city, as a result of which two Armed Forces personnel and two civilians were martyred. Five others, including two children, were wounded. In the course of retaliatory actions, the Armed Forces units stationed there carried out operations and inflicted shattering blows on the warmonger extremists.

According to another report, during a mopping up operation and search carried out in some areas of Daman in Qandahar Province, 11 enemy missiles were seized. A number of enemy trenches and strongholds were destroyed.

The Armed Forces inflicted shattering blows on the extremists in the regions of the Sarowbi District and along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway, as a result of which 48 extremists were killed and dozens wounded. Four mortars, three rifles, one DShK, and two enemy weapons and ammunition depots were destroyed.

In a separate report the BIA military section states the following about the military situation in Jalalabad: The enemy, in joint efforts with Pakistani Army troops and militia, intensified the firing of heavy weapons from the rear guard of the region around the Jalalabad city airport and the security posts around it. During the last 24 hours, 2,000 enemy heavy weapons shells have been fired at the positions. These were retaliated with heavy weapons fire by the Armed Forces units stationed there. Some 10 Armed Forces personnel and civilians were wounded, including two children and two women.

According to eyewitness reports, despite the supply to the front ranks by Pakistani Army divisions No 11 and 18 resulting from the heavy death toll and heavy military losses, the morale of the extremist groups and their Pakistani backers is sinking from day to day to the extent that a large number of armed individuals belonging to the extremist groups, despite the ever increasing threats from Pakistani military intelligence, are not prepared to take part in the military operations against Jalalabad.

The source reported that enemy losses during the last 24 hours were: 89 killed and 54 wounded. Among those killed were (Zalmai), (Mir Wali), and (Salimiar), three ringleaders. Three enemy weapons and ammunition caches, nine rocket launchers, four mortars and five strongholds and enemy command positions were destroyed.

The report adds that the Afghan Armed Forces units, who are heroically and bravely defending Jalalabad, have high morale and combat readiness.

Rebels Change Jalalabad Strategy

BK2403045789 Hong Kong AFP in English 0403 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 24 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas have changed strategy in the battle for the eastern city of Jalalabad and will hold on to captured posts instead of destroying them and moving on, a rebel commander said.

Haji Din Muhammad, 40, who commands thousands of rebels in the battle for control of Jalalabad airport, also said field commanders had improved coordination. "We meet daily and exchange views on our gains and losses and discuss new strategy for fresh attacks. We learn from our weaknesses," he told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE in his first interview since taking command in the battle for the airport.

The battle for Jalalabad, about to enter its third week, is said to be the bloodiest in the 10-year-old Afghan civil war. It is also the first rebel bid to capture a major city since the Soviet troops completed their withdrawal from Afghanistan last month. Mr. Muhammad, who belongs to the Hezb-e Eslami Khalis group and is the national security minister of the interim government set up by the resistance last month in Pakistan, arrived here this week on an undisclosed mission.

The resistance distributes the fighting among different groups of guerrillas, but the main command always remains in touch, he said. When one group felt weakened others were sent in, he added. "Our attacks are continuing and the enemy is resisting." But the siege has weakened the troops, he said. No supply helicopters have been able to land in Jalalabad in the past two days, he said.

"We know there is a difference between guerrilla fighting and the conventional war, hence we keep changing our tactics according to the situation," Mr. Muhammad said. He said the mujahidin were well entrenched in posts captured from Kabul government forces. Unlike the previous practice, he said, the guerrillas no longer fled after burning or destroying the posts. They were also using captured tanks and heavy artillery in the fighting to dismantle the government's first corps headquarters, which remains the main force defending the city and its airport.

"At least 10 mujahidin tanks have entered the airport and are in operation at the runway," he said. Government troops are only at the terminal and main gate, he said, adding that guerrilla tanks and heavy cannons have left the airport radar inoperative. Mr. Muhammad said the proximity of troops to the city's population had prolonged the battle.

"We are avoiding an all-out offensive for fear of civilian losses," he said, adding that government troops have prevented residents from leaving. Civilans flee despite the ban when the fighting is heavy and "our parties assist them in their flight to Pakistan," he said, adding however but many die in the cross fire.

Mr. Muhammad said some 500 mujahidin had been killed or wounded in the Jalalabad battle. Diplomats here however put the rebel death toll at 1,200. Government losses have been "much higher," he said. "We never leave our dead and bring bodies back for proper burials in liberated areas," he added.

He said the Kabul government fired up to four surface-to-surface Scud missiles daily, but that "the impact is nil except a big boom or wide craters." The government has the monopoly in the air and increasingly relies on air bombings. "But the 10 years of anti-communist war has taught the mujahidin how to defend against the air raids," he said. The air raids, mostly from high altitude to avoid the rebels' shoulder-fired Stinger missiles, have been largely ineffective, he added.

He said fighting for the past two days had been heavy on the road linking Jalalabad with Kabul, 150 kilometers (90 miles) west. Mr. Muhammad said only die-hard communists in the ruling party, trained and armed by the Soviets, were putting up resistance. The regular Afghan troops wait for the opportunity to surrender, he added. Between 15 and 20 government soldiers join the mujahidin daily, he said, a desertion rate inferior to what the resistance had expected.

A victory in Jalalabad would "further demoralise" Kabul and will prove to the Soviet Union that "their puppets have failed in Afghanistan," he said. "Strength of arms and forces is no barometer in this war, it will be morale which will decide the war," he added.

Helicopter Downed in Jalalabad

BK2403153989 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan the mujahidin captured Golran, the subdivisional headquarters of Herat Province, and seized 300 heavy and light machine guns and 4 military trucks. In Karokh, another subdivision of Herat Province, the mujahidin destroyed two military posts.

According to another report, the mujahidin attacked a mobile military convoy at Shahr-e Now in Qandahar, killing 16 Kabul soldiers and destroying 2 armored vehicles.

Meanwhile, fighting continues around the eastern city of Jalalabad. Mujahidin sources said that the mujahidin have foiled the Kabul forces' fresh attempts to reopen the Kabul-Jalalabad road. In this operation, the mujahidin reportedly shot down a helicopter and killed three Kabul soldiers.

Mujahidin Capture Golran

BK2403102289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1000 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin attacked an Army patrol squad near Shahr-e Now in Qandahar, killing 16 Kabul soldiers and destroying 2 armored vehicles. In Herat, the mujahidin captured the subdivisional headquarters of Golran and seized 300 heavy and light machine guns and 4 military trucks.

Wakil: 'Dailogues for Peace' With U.S. Sought

LD2303224489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil was interviewed this morning in his office by John Fisher, an American citizen who writes for THE NEW YORK TIMES.

In reply to the journalist's questions, the foreign minister said that contemporary international life requires reconstruction [word indistinct] and the resolution of issues through understanding and talks. War,no matter where it is or in what country, makes things worse and leads to the elimination of people and civilization.

He added that the Afghan Government and people regard the United States as a great country, with a high standard of living, advanced technology, and a mature civilization. They expect this country to help end the destructive war in the Republic of Afghanistan, not promote its continuation and intensification. The continuation of this war greatly damages U.S. credibility and prestige and causes Afghans to die at the hands of fellow Afghans, arousing anti-U.S. feelings among the Afghans.

As a great country, the United States should think about the humanitarian aspects of this war and not think about political interests. It should recognize that the United States cannot defeat the Afghan Government either militarily or politically. This fact must have been made clear to them in assessing the recent events in Jalalabad.

In reply to another question, the foreign minister said that in order to remove backwardness and to improve socioeconomic growth in backward countries such as Afghanistan, foreign and domestic investments are a pressing requirement. The encouragement of foreign investments (?assists) the growth and development of these countries and will enable them to achieve the blessings of civilization and tranquility.

The Republic of Afghanistan promotes such an economic policy and in this respect there are credible legal guarantees, such as the Constitution, the law on foreign investment, and the commercial law.

When asked whether the withdrawal of Soviet units had not created a vacuum from the military point of view, the foreign minister said that if the extremists had not been enjoying large-scale assistance from Pakistan's military intelligence service, their defeat would have been a simple task. Even when the Soviet Union's military units were present, it was the Afghan Armed Forces which foiled their attacks and inflicted deadly blows on them.

According to the estimates of extremists and countries supporting them, Jalalabad should have been siezed by 7 March, 2 days after the fighting started. Today is the 15th day and our Armed Forces are defending their positions with enormous courage. They forced the enemy to retreat and to flee even though the Pakistani military forces were extensivley supplying them with military equipment and logistic assistance.

Until yesterday, they were saying that without the presence of Soviet troops it would be impossible for the Afghan Government to survive. Now you can see that the Afghans themselves, pilots, and Afghan [word indistinct] have stood firm against the enemy conspiracies with enormous courage and in an epic-making manner. Our government is still standing firm 1 month after the withdrawal of the Soviet military units and will remain standing firm if war is imposed by the opposition and their regional and international backers.

We are in favor of talks and dialogues for peace with the United States, Pakistan, Iran, and our opposition. In this respect, specific plans and proposals were presented by the Afghan leadership. We hope that one day all the belligerent parties will perceive the rightness of these proposals.

Spokesman Urges U.S. To 'Take the Lead' in Peace

LD2303204189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Statement by the Foreign Ministry spokesman; date and place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] As everyone is aware, on the eve of the completion of the Soviet limited military contingents' withdrawal from Afghanistan, under the pretext of ensuring the safety of their diplomats in Afghanistan, some countries withdrew their embassy staff from Kabul. In doing so, they consciously and unconsciously encouraged the opposition to take the path of war and tried to strengthen its morale, which was close to collapse. However, as shown by subsequent developments, their decision in no way reflected reality because the security of the embassies was in no way threatened. Embassy security will not

be threatened in the future either. It was, therefore, not long before a number of these countries recognized their mistake in this regard and some are preparing to return their diplomats to Kabul.

In firmly observing the Vienna Convention, the Republic of Afghanistan has all the necessary facilities to ensure the complete security of foreign embassies and foreign diplomats in Kabul. In light of the articles and spirit of the Geneva accords and the resolution on Afghanistan passed by the UN General Assembly's 43d session, the Republic of Afghanistan asks those countries that have closed their embassies in Kabul to play a constructive role in maintaining peace in the Republic of Afghanistan and the region and to improve mutual relations by reconsidering their previous decision and returning their diplomats.

In this regard, we hope that as a guarantor of the Geneva accords and in consideration of its responsibility for these accords, the United States will play a major role in the effort to end the foreign interference in the internal affairs of our country and provide a suitable basis for maintaining peace in the Republic of Afghanistan. The United States should take the lead and return its diplomats. Such a step by this country would help the effort to maintain peace in the Republic of Afghanistan. We believe that the existence of embassies in Kabul and Washington could play a valuable role in improving relations between the peoples and governments of our two countries and as a result maintain peace and stability in the region.

The Republic of Afghanistan once again states that it has taken the necessary measures to ensure complete safety for the lives and property of foreigners in Kabul and there is no threat or danger to them in this regard. It hopes that these countries will realize in the shortest possible time the futility of their steps and take steps to return their diplomats to Afghanistan, which undoubtedly would be a sign of their good intentions toward the timely return of peace to the Republic of Afghanistan.

Meli Shura Message on Political Situation

LD2303190589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The following message on recent political developments in and around the Republic of Afghanistan was issued by the Meli Shura and addressed to the governments, parliaments, and peoples of the world:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. In choosing the national reconciliation policy as an indisputable principle in domestic and foreign policy in the past 2 years, the Republic of Afghanistan has always (?demonstrated) that political problems must be solved through dialogue without the use of force. In following this principle, we can say that holding talks is the only way to end the 10-year war attain peace. [passage omitted]

In denouncing the [word indistinct] approaches of Pakistan to the Geneva accords, we believe that the puppet and so-called government of the extremists is nothing more than a means for the realization of Pakistan's anti-Afghan objectives. They demonstrate the continuation of that country's blatant interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan to destabilize and continue the bloodshed in our country.

Regrettably the U.S. Administration, led by George Bush, is following a similar approach to Pakistan's concerning Afghanistan. Not only has it continued to dispatch weapons and military assistance to the oppositions but, by ignoring its commitments as a signatory to the Geneva accords, it encourages the extremist opposition to continue the bloodshed and broadly fans the psychological war against the Republic of Afghanistan. Certain Western countries have created artificial barriers against the UN's assistance to the Afghan people which takes place under the supervision of His Excellency Esteemed Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan.

These developments have caused the Republic of Afghanistan to temporarily declare a state of emergency.

While expressing total support for the provisions of the Geneva accords, the resolution of the 43rd UN General Assembly session and the recent proposals by the Afghan Government on a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan, the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan calls on all governments, parliaments, and peoples of the world to assist in the acceleration of the peace process in Afghanistan by utilizing their political and spiritual influence; and to oblige Pakistan and the United States to observe their commitments under the Geneva accords and to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan.

We believe that peace is an undelayable task, and the removal of tension in this part of the world can effectively secure peace and stability in Asia and all over the world. This can become a good example for the solution of other regional conflicts. Verily, success comes from God.

[Signed] The Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan

UN Notified of Pakistani 'Violations' 335-338

LD2403071389 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0439 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 23, BAKHTAR—The 335th, 336th, 337th and 338th notes of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan on flagrant violations from the Geneva accords by Pakistan were submitted here today to the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP).

The notes give precise information about thirty instances of clear violations from the provisions of the Geneva accords by Pakistan especially the second article of the first document of the accords. The notes say that the

Pakistani authorities have completely violated provisions of the said accords by sending different weapons including surface-to-surface rockets, as well as various explosives to the armed opposition groups inside the territory of Afghanistan.

The notes have asked the UNGOMAP to assess the said violations on the basis of paragraph seven, document four of the Geneva accords and inform the concerned sides of its findings.

According to another report, assessment team of UNGOMAP based in Kabul visited some places in Khayr Khanah area of Kabul city which had been hit by surface-to-surface rockets of the enemy [words indistinct] the rockets which hit Khayr Khanah area eight days ago caused material losses and killed a number of civilians as well.

THE MUSLIM Interviews Najibullah in Kabul

BK2303114789 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 12 Mar 89 pp 1, 6

[Report on interview with President Najibullah by Anwar Iqbal in Kabul—date not given]

[Text] Kabul—Afghan President Najibullah says it is still too early to say whether inviting the Soviets into Afghanistan in 1979 was a mistake.

He said: "What's important now is that the Soviets have left Afghanistan".

Dr. Najibullah was taking to THE MUSLIM recently at his Gol Khanah Palace in Kabul. His reluctance to criticise the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan contrasts sharply with Moscow's own admission of guilt. The Soviet media now describe their presence in Kabul as a "sin."

Even people in Najib's People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] admit that it was a mistake to seek Soviet interference in Afghanistan.

Some claim that the PDPA Politbureau opposed Karmal's decision to invite Soviet forces but he and the then Russian leader Leonid Brezhnev ignored their protest.

Though reluctant to give a verdict on Soviet interference, Najib criticised his predecessors in his interview to "THE MUSLIM". He said: "Some mistakes committed by leftist elements in the PDPA and the hasty programmes of some of the party leadership were alien to the character and objectives of the party."

He was explaining why a party, which started out as a socialist organisation, now talks about Islam even more than the clergy.

Referring to the current military situation President Najib said that conditions in Jalalabad, Khowst and other places bordering Pakistan were "very difficult and complicated."

This, he alleged was because of "the participation of Pakistani militia and armed forces in the military operations being carried out by the extremist armed opposition groups in those areas."

Najib also offered to hold a Loya Jirgah [Grand Assembly] of notables to resolve the Afghan problem. The Jirgah is expected to be held in Kabul immediately after the fasting month of Ramadan.

The decision of the jirgah, he said, should be binding on all. "If it asks me to step down, I will do so and if it asks the mujahidin to listen to our advice, they should also accept it."

He warned that those who want a military solution in Afghanistan will "meet the same fate as General Ziaul Haq."

The interview was held at Najib's residence inside the former Royal Palace of Kabul. The tank that was the first to enter the palace when the ruling party toppled Sardar Daud in 1978 is placed on a high platform outside Gol Khanah's main entrance.

Najib was friendly and forthcoming. Dressed in civilian clothes and wearing a warm smile, he looked different from the Najib who was distributing Kalashnikov rifles at a PDPA rally two weeks ago.

Speaking in four languages, Dari, Pashto, Urdu and English, the Afghan President seemed very much in control of the situation.

The quiet and orderly Gol Khanah Palace and Najib's confident voice almost made one forget the war outside.

Yet tanks, cannons, MBRLs [expansion unknown] and anti-aircraft missiles at important city centres and highways remind the vistors that the situation is not as quiet as it looks from inside the palace.

Instead of fashionable left-wing political jargon, Najib used simple expressions in the interview and quoted from Persian poetry whenever he wanted to make a point.

He went through different emotional phases while speaking on different subjects. One moment he would laugh at his enemies in neighbouring Pakistan and the next he would sound very sad when talking about "the death and destruction of the war."

He adopted a conciliatory tone when commenting on President Bush's decision not to recognise the interim government of the Afghan mujahidin formed in Islamabad last month and praised his "political farsightedness" in doing so. He also praised Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto for refusing to recognise the mujahidin government "despite pressures from her own army to do so."

He reserved the most bitter comments for Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and other radicals in the Afghan resistance but adopted a friendly tone when talking about the moderates in the mujahidin camp.

He described the interim government of the Afghan mujahidin as "a still born baby" and a government "made in Islamabad" and said "President Bush has shown a certain degree of realism in not recognising this government."

But he quickly added, "This change in the attitudes of Prime Minister Bhutto and President Bush should not be seen as a favour to our government."

He claimed, that the mujahidin had offered his party several ministries in the interim government that they formed last month. But Najib says he is rejecting this offer and instead proposed his own peace plan.

The plan suggests an immediate ceasefire all over Afghanistan. This is to be followed by the formation of a council which will serve as a forum for discussing "differences between the government and the opposition."

"And then we will talk about who gets what in a future broad-based government in Afghanistan," he said.

He said his government would welcome "all factions involved in the war, including fundamentlists" in the forum that he proposed.

President Nijib said if the Jirgah was not acceptable to the resistance, he was prepared to hold "fair and free elections and the winner should rule the country."

He said his government was always very careful in dealing with Pakistan "because of the special Islamic and brotherly ties of our common past and also because we don't want to strengthen the forces that are out to destroy democracy in Pakistan."

He said his government could not be indifferent to the fate of the Pashtun and Baluch people of Pakistan because of "our historical ties with them" but added "we are not using Pashtuns of Pakistan as a political card."

Defending his decision to impose a state of emergency in Afghanistan last month, Najib said: "The discovery of weapons and explosives and the arrest of subversive elements in Kabul justifies the decision to declare emergency."

President Najib said that shortages of food and fuel in Kabul city had been brought about by heavy snowfall, highway robbery and looting of food convoys by what he called opposition groups.

He said the situation had been further aggravated by profiteering. But his government had now taken stringent measures for transporting and distributing food and fuel in the city and preventing profiteering.

Asked to comment on reports that the Soviets had left ammunition worth 1.4 billion U.S. dollars, Najib said the figures were exaggerated. "We are opposed to further arming and we are even ready to disarm our forces if international guarantees are given that the other side will also do the same."

He said the Italians were instrumental in arranging a meeting between former King Zahir Shah and the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yuliy Vorontsov in Rome last month. This was the first Soviet contact with the former Afghan monarch since they withdrew their forces from Afghanistan.

Vorontsov later briefed Najib about his meeting with Zahir Shah.

India

Indo-Nepal Trade, Transit Treaty Expires 23 Mar

BK2303145289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] The Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty expired today with no response from Kathmandu to India's call for negotiations. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman told newsmen in New Delhi today that with this Nepal will no longer enjoy the special concessions and privileges. However, care has been taken not to disrupt the flow of items, including medicines, baby food, and other essential things to Nepal, he added.

Call for Negotiations Unanswered

BK2303162589 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] The Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty expired today with no response from Kathmandu to India's call for reopening negotiations. Responding to queries, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman described as illogical the approach of the Nepalese Government in not fulfilling various assurances it gave during the past 1 year. He told newsmen in New Delhi today that this attitude has not helped New Delhi to hold possible negotiations on the Trade and Transit Treaty.

Referring to the talks held by the Indian envoy in Kathmandu with the Nepalese foreign minister on Monday, the spokesman said it yielded no outcome.

Asked about the position after the expiry of the treaty, he said Nepal will no longer enjoy the special concessions and privileges. Nepal's goods will be treated like that of any other country. The spokesman, however, added that care has been taken not to disrupt the flow of items, including medicines, baby food and other essential things to Nepal. He also made it clear that there is no intention on the part of the Indian Government to cause any discomfort or trouble to the common people of Nepal.

Explaining the background, the spokesman said the trade treaty, which expired in March last year, was extended twice by 6 months each time. The transit treaty also expired today. For more than a year and a half New Delhi had been telling Kathmandu to remove the discriminatory clauses against Indians and Indian goods and give effect to the provisions of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. While Indian goods have not been given the concession in customs duty by Nepal, it has extended the facility to goods of certain other countries. Besides, Indian goods have been subjected to additional duty while the Nepalese items coming to India have always been enjoying concessions and privileges.

Replying to a question, the spokesman ruled out negotiations separately for trade and transit. He said India wants to look at trade and transit together.

In response to another question, the spokesman made it clear that even if a settlement is reached on a fresh treaty, it will not have retrospective effect from the date of the expiry of the earlier treaty.

Meanwhile, the chief spokesman of the Nepalese Government, Mr Radheshyam Bista, said in Kathmandu today that the foreign minister, Mr Sailendra Kumar Upadhyaya, will be visiting New Delhi in a couple of days time to discuss the Trade and Transit Treaty between the two countries. The spokesman said Kathmandu has made its intention clear that there should be separate agreements on trade and transit. He said the Nepalese Government is aware of the situation arising out of the expiry of the agreements between Nepal and India.

Nepalese Foreign Minister Cited

BK2303161389 Hong Kong AFP in English 1603 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 23 (AFP)—India withdrew special trade and transit concessions granted to Nepal under agreements that expired Thursday, a government spokesman said here. An Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the concessions were suspended following Nepal's refusal to negotiate a unified treaty to replace the pacts that expired. But India was taking special steps to ensure that Nepal received regular consignments of baby food, medicines and other essential supplies despite the expiration, he said.

India does not intend to cause discomfort or trouble to the Nepalese, the spokesman said. But he added that normal Indian customs laws and rules would now be applicable for Nepalese products too. India believes trade and transit are linked and had called on Kathmandu to negotiate a unified pact, but the Himalayan Kingdom has rejected the proposal as retrogressive and has insisted on separate treaties.

A Nepalese Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday: "We feel that while trade is a periodic arrangement between two parties in question, transit is a permanent condition for the international trade of any landlocked country." An official Nepalese source said in Kathmandu on Thursday that Nepalese Foreign Minister Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya would leave for New Delhi Saturday to attempt to sort out the Indo-Nepalese trade problems. Mr. Upadhyaya is going to India with hopes of starting fresh negotiations for two separate treaties on trade and transit, the Nepalese source said. The Nepalese source added that a bilateral trade agreement would be based on the principle of "most favoured nation" as suggested by India.

"We welcome India's proposal to conduct the trade between Nepal and India on the principle of most favoured nation but we wouldn't agree to start fresh negotiations for a single treaty of trade and transit," the source said. "What we are seeking from India is just to have some time margin to enable us to make adjustments and arrangements to meet our basic requirements including petroleum and oil products," the Nepalese source added. "To stop these essential goods within a short notice of three weeks is not normally done by a friendly country against a landlocked country like Nepal, and is expected to adversely affect Nepal's basic industries," the source said.

India has warned it would stop supplying Nepal from March 31 with cooking oil, rock salt and refined petroleum products, sparking panic-buying in Kathmandu. Under the trade treaty, no customs duties and quantitative restrictions were levied on Nepalese goods with 80 percent indigenous content and products manufactured with Indian collaboration. Excise duty on Indian imports was also refunded to the Nepalese Government.

India has had an annual quota of essential commodities, whose exports are banned to all countries except Nepal, and a revolving credit of more than 16.5 million dollars annually. India has imported petroleum and oil products against foreign exchange and sells them to Nepal for rupees.

The transit treaty gave Nepal access to 15 entry points across the open border in addition to transit facilities from Bhutan and Bangladesh. India also gave warehousing facilities to Nepalese goods at concessional rates. But now India would not be obliged to give Nepal access to more than one transit point.

Commentary on Nepal 'Priviliges'

BK2303115589 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Commentary by S. Srinivasan: "A Look at the Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaties]

[Text] Relations between India and Nepal are governed by the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950. The treaty was intended to create special relations in the political, economic and cultural fields between the two countries. Any impartial observer will know that the present tension arising out of the bilateral trade and transit treaties is largely because of the approach of the

Nepalese Government to the 1950 treaty. India values the special relations with the Himalayan Kingdom as evidenced by the treatment and concessions accorded by India to Nepal.

Under the 1950 treaty the Nepalese are enjoying a great deal of privileges both in regard to trade and movement. Under the trade treaty, which expired in March last year and extended twice each for 6 months, the Nepalese-manufactured products entering India are not subjected to customs duty nor any quantitative restrictions. India has extended a concession to Nepal by which it refunds the excise duty on Indian items exported to that country. This costs India monetarily about 10 million rupees every year. India also incurs around 500 million rupees annually in providing essential commodities to Nepal even though the export of these goods from India is normally banned. Besides, India also rushes to Kathmandu's rescue in times of emergency like floods and earthquakes. And in order to provide loans and grants to Nepal whenever it requires, India has created a revolving fund of 250 million rupees.

As a mark of its valued special relationship with Nepal, India has provided 15 transit points to enable the entry of foreign goods imported by Nepal. At these points Nepal is provided with warehousing and other facilities at subsidized rates. These concessions alone come to the tune of 10 million rupees a year.

It may be pointed out that legally India is supposed to provide only one transit point to Nepal as it has not ratified the 1965 Convention on Transit Treaty of Land-locked Countries and the UN Convention on Law of the Sea. Yet, India has chosen to provide 15 transit points at a considerable cost to itself. It not only means monetary loss to India but it is also facing the problem of smuggling. For several years, Nepal imported foreign goods far in excess of its requirement which resulted in their smuggling to India through the transit points.

Another significant feature is that India imports petrol and lubricants, spending valuable foreign exchange, but provides them to Nepal on rupee payment. Only refining and transport costs are charged from Nepal. On this account also, Indian incurred the loss 500 million rupees. Annually, India has also been providing an outright grant of 200 to 250 million rupees for setting up projects in Nepal. On the educational front, 275 seats have been reserved for Nepali students in various professional and technical institutions in India. Articles 6 and 7 of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between India and Nepal provided that nationals of each country be treated at par with their own citizens. There should be no restrictions on movement and ownership of property and on pursuit of employment, commerce, trade and industry. India on its part has abided by the two articles.

There are 3 to 5 million Nepali nationals in India, while about 150,000 Indians are staying in that country. In India, Nepalese can travel anywhere in the country and also join defense and paramilitary forces and the state police. Nepalese are also allowed to join all central government services, except the IAS [Indian Administrative Service], IFS [Indian Foreign Service] and IPS [Indian Police Service]. On the other hand, restrictions have been placed on the Indian nationals living in Nepal. During the last 2 years, they have been asked to obtain work permits. Indians engaged in commerce in the Kingdom are facing difficulties and availing of facilities like bank accounts in Nepal. The services of several Indian teachers, who were working in Nepal, have been terminated. Actually, a de facto ban has been put on the movement of Indians in Nepal. They are forbidden to travel in a 10 km trip along the China-Nepal border.

Thus, it may be seen that provisions of the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship have been violated by Kathmandu. As against a special and favorable treatment to the Nepalese goods, Indian items have been getting a discriminatory deal in the Kingdom. The Nepali Government has imposed additional customs duty on the Indian commodities while it has extended a 60 percent concession in duties on goods from certain other countries.

The Indo-Nepalese trade treaty ended on 23 March last year. It was extended for 6 months up to October 1988, pending renegotiation of the treaty. As Nepal was prevaricating the treaty, it was further extended for another 6 months period. The transit treaty is to expire today, that is Thursday. Despite the reported calls from the Indian Government for negotiation for renewing the treaty, Nepal has not responded causing a sense of disappointment on the Indian side. India has made it clear that its stand is not one of confrontation on the question of reviewing the trade and transit treaty. It is hoped that Kathmandu will see reason and respond to initiate the negotiation for the review.

Food, Medical Supplies Sent to Afghanistan

BK2303155289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] India today dispatched 8 metric tons of food and medical supplies for Kabul. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman told newsmen in New Delhi today that this was in response to the request made by the Afghanistan Government. He said another installment of 9 metric tons will be sent soon.

Sri Lanka's Perumal Wants PKF To Remain

BK2403090289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] The chief minister of the Northeastern Province of Sri Lanka, Mr Varadaraja Perumal, has said under the present conditions in Sri Lanka the presence of PKF [Peacekeeping Force] in the island is inevitable. He said

the PKF can be withdrawn only after proper and effective devolution of power to the provincial council and establishment of a public order and an enforcement force which can take up the duties of the PKF.

Addressing a news conference in New Delhi today, Mr Perumal paid tributes to the PKF for the sacrifices it has made to maintain unity of Sri Lanka. He alleged that presently even the minimum required devolution power has not been done by the central government in Sri Lanka. He said there are inadequacies and even for tackling minor problems of law and order, education, land distribution and public services, the council has to look to the Center.

Mr Perumal said his party wants peace and unity of Sri Lanka but warned that unless the Sinhalese leaders give real power to the council, peace in Sri Lanka will be in question.

Mr Perumal said during his 12-day stay in Delhi he discussed the problems facing the council with the Indian leaders, including the prime minister and the defense minister. He said their response was good. They assured him that they will do the maximum they can, but asked him to be patient.

In reply to a question, he said he has not discussed any new treaty with Indian leaders.

Responding to another query, Mr Perumal said he had talks with the Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr Karunanidhi also. He said Mr Karunanidhi was concerned about unity among Tamil parties in Sri Lanka and for a peaceful situation in Tamil areas in the island. He said the council has decided to attempt dialogue with the LTTE.

Warns of 'Bloodbath'

BK2403093289 Hong Kong AFP in English 0900 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 24 (AFP)—The Tamil chief minister of Sri Lanka's Northeastern Province Friday warned of a "bloodbath" if Colombo did not give greater autonomy to his newly-formed provincial government. Chief Minister Annamalai Varadaraja Perumal told reporters here that the Sri Lankan Government was expecting the island's Tamil minority to make concessions without giving anything in return. "If the provincial system fails, the whole thing will return to square one and there shall be no solution except a bloodbath," he told reporters on the next to last day of a controversial 15-day visit to India.

Mr. Varadaraja Perumal brushed aside Sri Lankan Government objections about his trip and discussions with Indian leaders, saying he would not have come to New Delhi if Colombo had been sympathetic toward his provincial government.

The chief minister, during his trip, discussed with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and other Indian ministers possible economic aid for war-shattered Tamil areas and asked India to intercede with Colombo on behalf of his provincial government. "They have given me positive indications," he replied when asked to spell out India's response.

Mr. Varadaraja Perumal, 36, leads the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) which controls the provincial administration that took office in Trincomalee in December after elections provided for by an India-Sri Lanka peace pact of July 1987.

He said: "This is the problem we have faced in Sri Lanka for the last 40 years. The Sinhalese always expect that Tamils should give concessions. There is nothing reciprocal." The Sinhalese are Sri Lanka's majority. The chief minister desribed as inadequate measures to transfer power to his provincial government announced by Colombo, complaining that it did not have powers to appoint even school principals. "The unity and integrity of Sri Lanka depends on devolution," he said, adding: "If it fails, unity and integrity will be in question. Everything will collapse. We don't want that to happen."

Asked if he was threatening to join the Tamil separatist war if Colombo did not accede to his demands, he said: "I don't say that. I am saying Tamils should not be allowed to return to the bush."

Mr. Varadaraja Perumal, a former university teacher, is a leader of the left-wing EPRLF, one of the five major Tamil militant groups which laid down arms after accepting the 1987 peace accord that sought to end Tamil separatism.

The pact has been repudiated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which since October 1987 has been fighting some 50,000 Indian troops deployed in the island's north and east. More than 3,000 people, including some 800 Indian soldiers, have died since then.

Mr. Varadaraja Perumal said Indian troops could withdraw from the island as and when his regional government formed a paramilitary force to maintain law and order in Tamil areas. "But under the present circumstances, the Indian Peace Keeping Force's stay is inevitable," he added. The chief minister warned that his government would not tolerate Colombo's reluctance to transfer power for too long. "I will first ask, then request, then appeal. Then we will take over." He did not elaborate. He also criticised the LTTE for fighting Indian troops, who he said were the Tamils' "brothers," and said the Indian Army had not been able to defeat the Tigers even after 17 months because they were fighting a conventional war against the guerrillas.

Mr. Varadaraja Perumal was accompanied by EPRLF leader K. Padmanabha and other party colleagues on the trip, which Colombo has criticised on grounds of propriety. Newspapers here have quoted Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne as saying that Mr. Varadaraja Perumal would be asked to explain the visit.

Assam Parties Discuss Peace, Pass Resolution

BK2403035189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Excerpts] In Assam, an all party meeting has stressed the need to find out a peaceful solution to the tribal problem of the state through negotiations. In a resolution adopted at the meeting at Dispur yesterday, it appealed to the Upen Brahma group of the Bodo Students Union to cooperate in sorting out an amicable settlement. The meeting condemned the recent violence. It urged the government to take strong measures against those who are indulging in various subversive activities.

In another resolution, the members appealed to the people of the state to maintain peace, integrity, and communal harmony to fight the communal forces unitedly. The meeting suggested that the government should take immediate steps to sort out problems and hold discussions with different tribal organizations. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, two persons were killed and several injured yesterday in a series of incidents of arson, bomb blast, and attacks on police by miscreants in Kokrajhar and Darram Districts.

Official reports reaching Guwahati say that miscreants hurled a powerful bomb at the Dhubri-Bongaigaon passenger train at Sesapani railway station, injuring seriously the driver. The engine caught fire. The assistant of the driver is reported to be missing.

In another incident, miscreants blasted 16 loaded trucks on the national highway at Gosaigaon. Miscreants also burned down houses of 10 families at Ramguri and Bentaguri villages. The affected people have been shifted to Bongaigaon town.

Iran

Majlis Speaker Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD2403125789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] On the 1st Friday of the New Year, the Muslim compatriots throughout the country held today the political-religious rites of the Friday prayers. Present on the Tehran University grounds and the adjacent avenues, the people of Tehran too observed this old Muhamadan tradition, under the leadership of Hojjat-ol Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

The Majlis speaker referred to the various dimensions of the recent message of the imam of the ummah and addressed those displaced during the imposed war. In his second sermon he said: Those displaced during the war are among the most victimized and yet most resisting strata of our society; they are those whose homes were destroyed by the enemy and who were forced to migrate to the satellite towns and camps. And yet they sent their youth to the frontline for the defense of Islam, while they themselves lived within the minimum of means. The war refugees have never been nor are at present, a problem for our society, but their self-sacrificing spirit has been an inspiring factor for our people. Such a spirit brought about a culturally constructive current in our society.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani remarked that as yet the conditions are not provided for our displaced compatriots to return to their cities. He said: In the 1368 budget bill [national budget for the year ending 20 March 1990] allocations needed for the reconstruction of the areas damaged by the war have been included. Yet, the afflicted provinces must be prepared to help the reconstruction effort. The government will be the agent for the implementation of the projects proposed. Fellow Iranians must, meanwhile, participate in the reconstruction effort through their vast and active participation so that we will be able to build the homes and cities of the dear war refugees, better than before.

The Majlis speaker praised the self-sacrifice of the martyrs, the POW's, the missing in action, and the wounded during the imposed war. He then said: To make up for the disruptions stemming from the war, the authorities and the people must regard the affairs of attending to the families of the martyrs, the POW's, the missing in action, the disabled, and the refugees as the axis of their thinking and action.

Referring to the auspicious birthday anniversary of the hidden imam, Hashemi-Rafsanjani talked about the dimensions of the global government of his highness the hidden imam, as well as his reappearance as promised by great divine religions.

In conclusion, he said: We regard the government organization, the revolution, and the trend of the Islamic resurgence as a spark from the sacred light of His Highness, the Christ, may our souls be sacrificed for Him. The day will arrive when the sovereignty of the divine justice, under one flag and one law, is constituted in the world; on such a day the victory will belong to the good and sovereignty will belong to justice.

Khomeyni Message Seen as Attack on Montazeri

TA2303181689 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Ruhollah Khomeyni's message to war refugees has been assessed in informed Tehran circles as the beginning of Khomeyni's public attack against Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri. In this message, without naming Ayatollah Montazeri, Ruhollah Khomeyni made him the main target of his attack, saying: I have not formed a fraternity bond with anyone, regardless of their position.

In this connection, our fellow strugglers have reported that what caused Ruhollah Khomeyni's attack against Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri was that a few days after being informed that Ruhollah Khomeyni had ordered the execution of thousands of political prisoners

in the country's jails, Montazeri wrote a letter to Khomeyni denouncing the order. This letter angered Khomeyni because Ayatollah Montazeri identified Ruhollah Khomeyni personally as being responsible for the killing of more than 12,000 political prisoners.

Mohtashemi Says World Powers 'Humiliated'

LD2303150889 Tehran IRNA in English 1314 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 23, IRNA—World powers backing Salman Rushdie's blasphemous novel "The Satanic Verses" have been humiliated by Imam Khomeyni's decisive stand, the interior minister said Thursday.

"All the world powers who stood in defence of (Rushdie)... have today become humiliated and suppressed in the face of the honorable imam's divine and firm stand, and the stand of the Islamic front," 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi said.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the leader of the Islamic Revolution at his residence in Jamaran, north Tehran on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of Imam Mahdi (greetings be upon him), the 12th imam of Shi'a Muslims.

Mohtashemi was echoing the imam's statement on Wednesday on the European Community's decision on Monday to allow member states to send back their ambassadors to Tehran.

"Today they are returning humiliated, disgraced and in wretches, regretful of what they did," the imam said in his message.

The ambassadors were returning but the imam's fatwa [religious decree] ordering Rushdie's execution still stands.

"World colonial and arrogant powers should know the children of Islam will execute the divine ruling against deviated people, apostates and others trying to fight Islam."

Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telephone Mohammad Gharazi, the imam's representative in the police force, Rasul Montajabnia, Interior and PTT Ministries personnel, and foreign girl theology students, were also present in the meeting.

Outlining the activities of his ministry during the past decade, Gharazi said 540 Iranian cities and towns now enjoyed automatic telephone systems.

Before the revolution only 70 towns had such facilities, he added.

French Foreign Ministry on Khomeyni's Remarks

AU2303150289 Paris AFP in English 1428 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Paris, March 23 (AFP)—A French Foreign Ministry spokesman Thursday described Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni's comments on a European Economic Community decision allowing EEC ambassadors to return to Iran as "exaggerated."

"The French Government does not usually comment on statements made by religious figures when they have an exaggerated character," the spokesman said.

The Iranian spiritual leader said Wednesday that EEC ambassadors were returning to Iran "ashamed and humiliated" one month after the 12-nation body decided to recall its envoys from Teheran.

The recall came amid furor in the West over a death decree from Ayatollah Khomeyni against British author Salman Rushdie, whom he accused of blaspheming Islam in the novel "The Satanic Verses."

The French spokesman said his government had yet to decide whether or not it would sent its ambassador, Christian Graeff, back to Iran. But Foreign Minister Roland Dumas suggested Monday in Brussels that Mr. Graeff could be heading back soon to Teheran.

Greece, Italy and Ireland have so far announced they would send their ambassadors back to Iran following the EEC's decision on Monday.

Official on Possible Restrictions on FRG Imports

NC2303160389 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 18 Mar 89 p 2

[Text] Tehran—If West Germany does not revise its political attitudes toward Iran, there will be restrictions placed on imports from that country. This was disclosed to TEHRAN TIMES by a high-ranking official of the Ministry of Commerce who did not wish to be identified.

Last year, in 1988 (1366) Iran imported 2.2 billion dollars worth of goods from West Germany.

The same source, referring to commercial exchanges between Iran and Britain, said: Iran's imports from the European Community totals $5.2 billion per year. Sixteen percent of our total trade was with Britain. Iran is considering cutting off the import of all the nonessential items from Britain, the source said. The is a form of the economic sanctions contemplated against Britain, he said. [sentence as received]

Kamal Ganje'i, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, discussing the situation created by the West Germans causing difficulties for the export of goods to Iran, said that West Germany was our No. 1 economic partner last year, and again this year.

He said that on the pretext of empty excuses West Germany has now stopped the barter trade with Iran. This has caused difficulties which, if they are continued, will be reciprocated by Iran, he said.

Ambassador to Greece Examines Ties With EC

NC2303172189 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 18 Mar 89 p 2

["Exclusive" interview with Habibollah Bi'azar Shirazi, ambassador to Greece with unidentified TEHRAN TIMES correspondent in Tehran—date not given]

[Text] Tehran—The West has trampled upon religious sentiments of world Muslims in the name of freedom of expression, an Iranian official abroad said here yesterday.

In an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES, Iran's Ambassador to Greece, Habibollah Bi'azar Shirazi noted that reverence for peoples' beliefs should be the cornerstone of international relations.

The European Economic Community (EEC)—and the Western countries—should prevent any blasphemous act not only affecting their own Muslim community but also to honor beliefs of world Muslims, Shirazi maintained.

He observed that the West should know the difference between blasphemy and freedom of expression and added that blasphemy is definitely against freedom of expression.

Commenting on Irano-Greece ties, Shirazi noted that prior to the Rushdie affair Iran and Greece held negotiations to expand mutual commercial ties. A joint economic commission was slated to be held in relations to this, he added.

"Evidently," he said, "Greece is in need of Iranian oil and negotiations were previously held to this end." While Iran possesses giant oil resources, Greece holds the world's greatest commercial naval fleet, he said.

Iran could have used Greece's commercial shipping and other facilities, which matter was to be discussed in the joint commission, he noted adding that negotiations were also under way with Greece for its cooperation in Iran's post-war reconstruction.

Referring to Greece's reaction to Salman Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses", Shirazi said Greece reacted very mildly to the blasphemy due to its friendly political ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Shirazi further observed that Greece is principally in favor of Third World countries and has not established diplomatic ties with Israel but has allowed Palestine to set up a representative office in Athens.

Elsewhere Shirazi added that blaspheming religious beliefs is against freedom of expression and cited Greece's moves earlier stopping the screening of the film "Christ's Last Temptation." The film was banned even in Muslim countries as it blasphemed Christian beliefs.

Governments of Islamic countries will have to listen to the call of their people and the Koran as Imam Khomeyni's Fatwa on Rushdie affair is a decisive religious decree upon which all Islamic schools of thought are alike, Shirazi pointed out.

He expressed hope that the Riyadh Conference would take a firm and apt stance toward this affront to Islam.

Khamene'i Continues Visit to Khorasan Province

LD2403145689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Excerpts] President Khamene'i is continuing his tour of Khorasan. He met a group of people in Tayyebat. Our colleague Bazr-Afshan has sent a report from Tayyebat:

[Begin Bazr-Afshan recording] President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, in the second stage of his tour of Khorasan, this morning arrived in Tayyebat to acquaint himself with the problems of the oppresed border region of Tayyebat and to meet the people of this predominantly Sunni provincial city. He was welcomed by the Friday prayer leaders, the scholars of the region, and some local officials. [passage omitted]

Mr Khamene'i stated that the arrogant powers hostility to the Islamic Republic is due solely to our defending Islam and the message of the Koran. He said that the Iranian nation, as over the past 10 years, will maintain the principles of the revolution, ready to steadfastly and firmly defend the Islamic values.

The president added that we do not need the United States, France, England, or Germany. With our own efforts and endeavors and with the cooperation of friendly nations, we can continue our way.

Mr Khamene'i then invited the Iranian nation to increase its efforts in the agricultural and industrial sector. He referred to the necessity of using the country's minds, creative forces, and talents for reconstruction projects. He also urged people to refrain from creating discord between the Shi'ites and Sunnis, and instead unitedly combat the enemies' plots. The president then stressed the importance of guarding the people residing on the borders of the Islamic Republic. He also referred to the sensitivity and importance of the Afghan issues. He said that today Afghanistan is undergoing big changes, and our nation and government cannot be indifferent to this issue. Mr Khamene'i said that the departure of the occupying forces from Afghanistan should not open the way for the presence of the United States and its allies. The revolutionary Muslim forces must be alert, so that Islam becomes the governing force in that country.

Concluding his remarks, the head of the Expediency Discernment Council called narcotics the big colonialists' weapon for destoying human and moral forces of nations. He said that the distribution of narcotics is not a trade, but an international plot. Therefore, the military

and disciplinary forces must strongly fight this menace with the help and cooperation of the people living in the border regions. [end recording]

Majlis Deputy From Kerman Dies in Car Accident

LD2403084889 Tehran IRNA in English 0833 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Kerman, March 24, IRNA—Majlis Deputy from Kerman Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abbas Hasani-Sa'di lost his life in a road car accident Thursday.

Hasani's driver who is said to be his nephew was also killed in the accident occurred on Kerman-Rafsanjan road (southeast Iran).

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasani was elected deputy in the third parliamentary elections last year, winning 82,758 votes.

Before being elected as deputy, Hasani held such positions as Imam Khomeyni's representative in Construction Jihad and substitute leader of Friday prayers in Kerman.

Commentary on Students Expelled From UK

LD2303224289 Tehran in English to Europe 1957 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Political commentary]

[Text] The British Government, yesterday expelled five Iranian students from Britain, under the pretext of what the BBC has described as security reasons. This move by London, once again proves to the world that the pro-human rights slogans of which Britain considers itself as the pioneer is a hollow slogan.

How come the students who have officially and legally enrolled, who pay tuition fees, and spend most of the day in classes and libraries, threaten Britain? If such a claim is true, Muslims must be happy that the Iranian Muslim students are so powerful, and the British nation must be sorry that their police and security forces have been so timid and incompetent. And finally, the Islamic nations must take heed that the island which is called Great Britain is only a paper tiger.

Of course, we comprehend London official's shamefulness and disgust with the political isolation which they are faced with. But what cannot be comprehended is that the basic principles of education rights are trampled upon by a country which claims to be the father of Western democracy over the past centuries. Climatic conditions are said to affect human beings and this saying is at least true about Mrs Thatcher's government, for British foreign policy is like London's sky, that is, if one basks at the sunshine of the mornings and goes out without an umbrella and a raincoat, his minimum punishment would be to catch cold and get wet.

If the member of states of the European Economic Community had not learned about Britain's trick on time, we would have had to call into question the French people's (?delicacy) and the Swedish people's independence of action. However, the EEC members (?showed) that they should not have left their status with London's decision. The (?Britain) says that the 9th decade of the 20th century was like a century ago, when London dictated its will to others whenever it wished so. Of course, the (?Britain) attempted to show to the world that London was still a center for decisiontaking, though they still secretly pursue the UN's policies. The French and Germans have realized this matter, and these two countries' recent rapprochement, which has strongly worried London, is a sign of their vigilance.

Britain, which has generated the Al-Quds-occupying regime itself, tries to make believe that it is the protector and advocate of the Palestinian nation. Fortunately, Muslim nations have realized London's tricks, and the recent demonstrations held in the Islamic countries with anti-British slogans show this issue. Britain's recent anti-Islamic move in supporting Salman Rushdie's book, which has insulted Islam, the holy Koran, and the holy prophet of Islam, has angered the Muslims so much that the Muslim people ask why their governments have not revised their relations with London. Britain attempts to make believe that Salman Rushdie's case is only related to Iran, not knowing that Iran is not alone in this regard, for Iran has only 50 million Muslims, whereas 1 billion Muslims have been mobilized against London. Expulsions of Iranian students is only sign indicating that Britain, in its anti-Islamic move, is ready to trample on the slogans which it [word indistinct] for others.

When the Islamic Republic announced that a British national who has been a spy and has confessed to being a spy, who have given an official interview, must be punished according to the rule of Islam, the ringleaders in London cried out that the human rights have been endangered. Now the world must pass judgment as to which one is against the human rights: the implementation of Islamic ruling against a spy who hatches plots against an Islamic government and a revolutionary nation, or recalling students from their classes to the police stations without giving them the chance to complete their educational affairs, in expelling them from Britain. Mrs Thatcher's government knows that the Islamic Iran cannot help to retaliate it. However, perhaps the Iranians who have realized the antirevolutionary nature of London's regime did not know to what extent the British Government could have acted improperly, so that even the voice of the British religious officials, too, have been raised in protest to London government's uncalculated measures.

TEHRAN TIMES Decries Halabjah Bombing

NC2303174389 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 18 Mar 89 p 2

[Editorial: "International Law Impotent on Halabjah Tragedy"]

[Text] Almost a year has passed since the horrednous chemical bombings in Halabjah by the Iraqi Air Force. What we know for certain today after all this time is that

there is no international law that has been devised yet, since then or even before, to prevent the recurrence of such a catastrophe on the scale as we know it as Halabjah.

What is worse is that the sad truth is emerging that even what measures there were against the use of chemical weapons on an extensive scale are gradually loosing their color and are falling into oblivion.

A very good reason for the ineffectiveness of preventive measures, even if these were there to an extent in the international alws already present, is that the leaders in Baghdad were in spite of this able to use horrendous chemical and bilogical weapons in recent times and get away with it with no condemnation for their criminal unscrupulousness.

Yet, it is not easy to imagine that any individual or nation can so easily get away with the perpetuation of such crimes of this magnitude. It is a pity indeed that what remains of Halabjah as a record are only a few films and photographs in the archives of the mass media television and press networks and nothing more than this.

With all the publicity given it, even the chemical weapons conference sponsored by France chaired by that country's Foreign Minister Roland Dumas was nothing less or more than a conservative diplomatic maneuver and carried no more significance and appeared only to have been held for certain political considerations.

All points to the fact that laws prevalent during the last few decades on their banning of chemical weapons were nothing more than a reflection of the political conscience of past generations. Even while this was so and the world proclaimed against the Iraqi genocide at Halabjah, the Iraqi leaders were able to justify their use of chemical weapons saying it was only used in defense.

In contrast to all this, if the infamous Salman Rushdie, author of the sacrilegious "The Satanic Verses" were to be mowed down by a bullet of an anonymous man, the mass media is sure to blazon the whole episode branding it as oppression against culture and asking for redress. But the deaths of thousands in Halabjah did not make any such impact and the mass media only did its best to deflect the eyes of the world from the enormity of the crime. In this can be seen a lack of perspective for the true truth, for the realities behind the truth. The media in the world today appears to have become the conscience of humanity, but alas it is an impure conscience and cannot see the truth for what it is.

Again, despite the hue and cry raised over nuclear disarmament in the world, the newer generations of the world today will have to confront the stark reality of the more horrendous disasters that are likely by a lack of a proper moral conscience. If a small Third World power like Iraq can be expected to get away blithely with violation of international laws on an enormously and cruelly extensive scale, how can the more powerful countries of the world be restrained or expected to comply with international laws and act with a clear conscience?

Paper Deplores 'Uncooperative' Cooperatives

NC2403055989 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 16 Mar 89 pp 1, 4

[Editorial: "Employees' Problems Cannot Be Solved by Cooperatives Which Are Cooperatives in Name Only"]

[Text] All employees, and in particular, all those who receive a fixed pittance, can be considered not at the poverty level but below it. This is a fact and whether we admit it or not, it in immutable.

This stratum of society has endured the worst hardships. Blows from spiraling prices and inflation exert the greatest pressure around the throats of this hardworking sector. What should be done? It is obvious that the monthly salaries of these people go directly into the pockets of the wealthy ones. The fact is that without actually wanting to, the government pours a large part of its oil income into one area, that is, in the form of wages of employees and government department personnel, into the receptacles of small and large investors!

Who is buying goods? Who are the customers in the shops and on the streets? Who is providing a livelihood for the private sector and the independent entrepreneurs? It is these employees who comprise the bulk of such consumers. Even if the private sector employees buy something, they still redeem most of their capital and profit from society's consumers, who once again are the workers and employees from fixed income groups.

In such circumstances, an increase of 1 tuman [10 rials] in the employees pay would result in the private sector's raising prices for goods by 10 or 100 tumans! Thus, this is no solution. Even if it were, it would not help. But it is not. We are thus forced to repeat our question: What should be done?

At present we do not wish nor dare to propound long-term and so-called fundamental solutions! Perhaps we cannot think of any! However, one of the solutions is to rescue the cooperatives from their present uncooperative position because the only things cooperative about them are their names! These names are really misnomers, fallacious, and ludicrous! All these cooperatives have are some Lee Jeans, salted popcorn, chewing gum, lead pencils, and perhaps some locally produced sauce and canned cherries—all in a chatoic state! Once again, without any question or doubt, these are meant for the lucky and heroic employees!

Pakistan

Prime Minister Bhutto Addresses Nation 23 Mar

BK2403105489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1534 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's address to the nation on the occasion of Pakistan's National Day; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] My dear countrymen, peace be upon you. Today is the auspicious national day of Pakistan. On this day in 1940 the nation under the leadership of the Qaide Azam

[Mohammad Ali Jinnah] declared the achievement of Pakistan's destiny—the destiny of independence and sovereignty, of a democratic Pakistan, of freedom and prosperity for the people of Pakistan. The great national poet Allame Iqbal had dreamt about this destiny. Under the leadership of the great leader Qaide Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah the caravan of democracy reached its destination—independence. The Qaide Azam many times expressed his ideas about the political, social, and economic map of Pakistan. In one of his speeches, the Qaide Azam described the picture in these words: Islam and its idealism have given us the seed of democracy. It taught us human equality and justice and to treat all fellow beings with fairness.

My brothers, elders, sisters, and colleagues! The creation of Pakistan meant a war between the oppressors and the oppressed. This was the war between the friends of the people and the peoples' enemies. On the one side, there were imperialist forces that wanted to keep Muslims in the subcontinent slaves forever, while on the other side were the vanguards of Muslim independence ever ready to sacrifice their lives. On the one side, there were enemies of the people who were serving the cause of dictatorship and authoritarianism, while on the other side were those who were imbued with the spirit of independence and were fighting the tyrants to serve the cause of justice and truth. They sacrificed their lives in the struggle against plunderers in support of the oppressed and deprived. Their war was undertaken against the plunderers and their supporters. On the one side were these plunderers, while on the other were the defenders of the people's rights. The people claimed that freedom is every human being's right. We are not willing to remain slaves forever. Our fate is not to remain poor forever. They fought for the supremacy of truth and justice. They made many great sacrifices for the realization of an independent, sovereign, and Islamic Pakistan. With their blood they laid the foundation for an independent Pakistan. They turned the Allame Iqbal's dream into a reality. On this auspicious day I salute the holy warriors and martyrs of the Pakistan movement.

My dear countrymen, it is a matter of sorrow and regret that very little opportunity was given for democracy to blossom and flourish in Pakistan despite the many great sacrifices that were made. Of the 42 years of our national life, 24 to 25 years were spent under the yoke of martial law which shattered the people's dreams for independence, prosperity, and democracy. The dictators hanged the first elected prime minister of the country. His only crime was that he was the standardbearer of the people's hopes. Hatred was promoted to perpetuate the dictatorship. The flames of regionalism and sectarianism were fanned. Those who loved freedom were fired, jailed, and separated from their (?leaders). Violence and terrorism were promoted. Attempts were made to ruin the country ideologically and economically.

Today, on the occasion of Pakistan Day, I congratulate the martyrs of independence. They defeated the dictators and plunderers with their power of faith and spirit of freedom following the path shown by the leaders of the Pakistan movement. Such martyrs are heroes of a dynamic nation. As a result of the sacrifices of these valient men, a morning of freedom has dawned after 11 and ½ years of dictatorship. An elected representative government has assumed the reins of power on behalf of the oppressed people. This is a very critical time. The prolonged dictatorship had shaken the country's foundations. The fabric of the nation was disintegrating. The whole nation was burning. No area was free from conflicts and terrorism. No area was free from the noise and echo of bullets and bomb explosions. The whole nation was the victim of disturbances and corruption. Everywhere, bribery was rampant and unemployment was mounting. The educated youths were busy searching for jobs. The poor and working class people were searching desperately for employment so they could feed their children. When we assumed the reins of government, the country was faced with serious economic problems. The treasury was empty. The national funds were spent on nondevelopmental activities, currency notes were being printed without any consideration, and the value of money was declining. The prices of essential commodities were increasing, and due to these circumstances, even now the prices are high. The country was laden with the burden of debt. The future generation—the sons and grandsons of the country—were shackled with chains of debt. On one side we were given an empty treasury and on the other empty food godowns. The floods wreaked havoc in the country and no serious effort was made to overcome it. Everywhere, there was darkness and emptiness. Every direction was overcast with heavy clouds of disappointment and frustration. There was an atmosphere of tension on our eastern and western borders.

My elders, brothers, sisters, your elected representative government assumed the reins of power under this alarming situation. The people's representatives were not frightened by the situation and now they are confronting it bravely. The people's power is the biggest power, and this power is with us. The best wishes of the people are with us. People have reposed their confidence in us. We will, god willing, accomplish this confidence. We are determined to face every challenge with courage, fortitude, and spirit. Earlier, people were hankering for grains of wheat. We have made arrangements for the supply of wheat in bulk. Now, there is no shortage of wheat in any part of the country. God showered his mercy on us. The monsoon was timely and the harvest was good.

On the economic front our hands were tied. Still, we spent 2 billion rupees on welfare programs for the people after reducing unnecessary and nondevelopmental expenditures. These people's programs will be formulated by the people themselves accordingj to their needs, and their elected representatives will implement them with the people's cooperation. Under these programs, nongovernmental institutions will also be granted financial assistance in order to realize the participation of the people. Without the participation of the people, no

developmental program will succeed. The basic concept of people's programs is self-help. I have confidence that the people are fully participating in this program.

After coming to power, your representative government ordered the release of political prisoners. Exiled Pakistanis are now returning to their motherland. Islam commands holy war against despotism and domination. To speak the truth before a despot ruler is the greatest holy war. These holy warriors accomplished this command and made sacrifices. They spoke the truth during hard times. They had full confidence in the divine nature of their mission. They knew that they stood for the truth. Therefore, may God make their efforts successful.

A great number of our brethren of the Marri tribe had left Pakistan with their families. Today, on this auspicious occasion, I, on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, announce general amnesty for them.

We believe in federalism. Realization of national cohesion is our paramount goal. We have defeated separatists at every stage. We consolidated the nation under the flag of Pakistan. We provided our nation with one platform—the platform of freedom, constitution, justice, progress and prosperity, and respect for humanity.

For the last 11 and ½ years, what crime was not committed against us? After coming to power the path of revenge beckoned to us. But, the people's representative government did not take this path; it did not take revenge against anyone. We have established the supremacy of the rule of law. We have restored the dignity of the judiciary. We granted full freedom of the press and of speech. The opposition parties were given representation in the mass media for the first time, and now their voices are being heard over the radio. Their faces are being seen over television. The restrictions imposed on writers, intellectuals, and journalists have been lifted. The unions of laborers, students, and workers have been reinstated. The unwarranted restrictions for travel abroad have been lifted and the exit list has been canceled. The passport procedures have been simplified for every Pakistani. We guarantee legitimate rights to every part of federal Pakistan. We have restored the sense of honor of the citizens—whether rich or poor, whether belonging to one province or another, whether from one tribe or another, or whether from one ethnic origin or another. In our view all are equal. All are citizens of Pakistan and all deserve respect.

We created a balance in the foreign policy. The restoration of democracy in Pakistan has enhanced our prestige and given our words credibility. We have made special efforts to lessen tension and pressure on the borders. Great progress in international relations has been made within a short period.

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was completed on 15 February. This was an historic event, and paved the way for a comprehensive settlement of the Afghanistan issue. We will continue to work for the realization of this objective. We believe that only the Afghan people have the right to decide their own future without external interference.

During the summit conference of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC], meetings were held with the Indian prime minister. Three agreements were signed as a result of these meetings, which will accelerate the process of normalizing relations between India and Pakistan. The holding of the SAARC summit conference in Pakistan opened new avenues for regional cooperation in many fields.

After performing the minor pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, I had a meeting with King Fahd, which became a major milestone in our fraternal relations with Saudi Arabia.

With my visit to our great friendly country, the People's Republic of China, our bilateral relations have been further consolidated. In Japan, I had the opportunity to meet and exchange views with several important leaders of the world, including the U.S. President.

After the restoration of democracy in the country, major world personalities visited Pakistan. The visits of the Turkish president and the prime ministers of Australia and Tunisia have further strengthened our relations with those countries.

The visit of the Soviet foreign minister to Pakistan provided the opportunity to improve bilateral relations.

Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's visit to our country reflected our feelings of brotherhood and solidarity with the heroic people of Palestine.

My dear countrymen, I consider it necessary to mention the valiant Armed Forces of our beloved country as well on this important occasion. While effectively defending the country's frontiers, they also cooperated wholeheartedly with the people to restore democracy in the country. Thus, the Pakistani Armed Forces not only succeeded in fully conforming to the aspirations of the people but also secured a place of dignity and honor in their minds which is unprecedented. We are proud of our Armed Forces for placing national interests above their own. The atmosphere of mistrust and chaos ended as a result of the elections. Each Pakistani citizen, under the banner of an elected government, is ready to shed the last drop of his blood to defend the beloved motherland. The Armed Forces of Pakistan made a respectable decision to extend their fullest support for the restoration of democracy. As a recognition of their above decision, today I am conferring the Medal of Democracy on the Armed Forces of Pakistan.

Ladies and gentlemen, the country is now faced with a number of problems. I wish these problems could be solved overnight, but it is not so. The problems can be solved only through constant labor, and in this great task we seek your cooperation at every step. Government job opportunities are limited, but the number of applicants is unlimited. They should realize that the government

wants to help them. They should also think about the help the government can extend to them so that they can stand on their own feet. In this connection, arrangements can be made to provide funds to skilled persons wanting to start their own businesses. The government is ready to provide financial assistance and other facilities to those who want to set up small workshops, tractor repair shops, or other small shops, or who want to operate a taxi or rickshaw.

We have already formulated an industrial policy which will end the delays and the bottlenecks now being faced in setting up new industries. Under this policy, permission will be granted within 2 months to establish an industrial unit, and in the following 2 months all necessary facilities will be provided.

In the present day world, progress is impossible without having a modern communication system. Your government has taken radical steps to provide telephone and telefax services. We have also reduced (?tariffs) on telex and telefax systems which are necessary for modern commercial and industrial development.

Steps will be taken to provide protection to women in light of the National Commission's report. A special cell has been set up for narcotics control.

As your sister, I want to assure you that this country belongs to all of us. We have begun the task of rebuilding the nation. Whether we are Sindhi or Punjabi, Pathan or Baluch, we are all Pakistanis and we are all proud of being Pakistanis. Let us all take a vow today that we will devote all of our energy to the national building task; that we will overcome all difficulties and remove all obstacles unitedly; that Pakistan is a great country and we will make it even greater. May God help us in this task. Thank you. Long live Pakistan.

Further on President's National Day Address

BK2403023489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Excerpt] In connection with Pakistan National Day, military parades, seminars, symposia, poetry readings, exhibitions, and social and cultural functions were held through out the country today. A grand joint services parade was held at the Race Course grounds in Rawalpindi. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan received the salute of the troops and reviewed the parade. Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto was also present on this occasion.

Addressing the parade, the president stressed the need for keeping the spirit of democracy alive. He said that with the restoration of democracy we have taken only one step toward the goal for which Pakistan was created. The real goal is to form a progressive and prosperous society based on the sovereignty of God and democracy, with justice and fair play in every aspect of life. We must expedite our efforts to achieve this goal. The president stressed the need for the spirit of mutual understanding and coexistence and said the verdict of the people at the elections should be accepted with an open mind. The people expect their elected representatives to solve most of their problems and to meet the targets of national development. He urged the nation to make a fresh pledge to unite for the security and stability of the country. The president said the (?protection of) solidarity of the country and national development is the combined responsibility of all the citizens from all the areas.

He paid glowing tributes to the Armed Forces for protecting the geographic and ideological frontiers of the country and said the nation is proud of the professional competence of its Armed Forces. He specifically praised the responsible and impartial role of the Armed Forces in realizing the transfer of power after the free and fair elections, which earned them a good name at home and abroad. He assured that regarding the defense of the country the Armed Forces are better trained, better equipped, and have higher morale than ever before. The elected government is giving priority to the development of defense technology, self-sufficiency in defense requirements, and the acquisition of those weapons necessary for defense. He praised the efforts of the technical experts for producing missiles and other equipment in the country, which were displayed in the parade today.

The president made it clear that Pakistan is the supporter of peace and security in the world, particularly in this region. Pakistan is also ready to make any sacrifice to protect its freedom.

The president welcomed the Afghanistan seat taken by the interim government of Afghanistan at the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] foreign ministers meeting; he said this is tantamount to international recognition of the valiant struggle of the mujahidin.

Radio Pakistan's representative says the significant feature of the parade this year is the display of the indigenously-made ground to ground missiles, Hatf-1 and Hatf-2, and the shoulder-fired ground to air missiles, Anza.

Parades were also held in all the four provincial capitals on the occasion of Pakistan National Day today. [passage omitted]

Bhutto Hosts Luncheon for Punjab Chief Minister

BK2203154589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 22 Mar 89

[Text] Punjab Chief Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif called on Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto in Rawalpindi today. The meeting, which lasted for more than 2 hours, was followed by a luncheon hosted by the prime minister.

Later talking to newsmen, the Punjab chief minister said that they exchanged views on matters of national importance. He described his talks with the prime minister as good. He said that the Pakistan People's Party and the Islamic Democratic Alliance can work for the people's welfare while adhering to their respective constitutions.

Bahraini Information Minister Meets Bhutto
JN2403092989 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0740 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Lahore, 24 Mar (WAKH)—Pakistani Prime Minister Mrs Benazir Bhutto received Bahraini Information Minister Tariq 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mu'ayyad in Lahore last night. During the meeting, Al-Mu'ayyad conveyed to Mrs Bhutto the greetings of His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Salman Al Khalifah, prime minister of Bahrain, and his congratulations to her and her country on Pakistan's independence day. [passage omitted]

U.S. Third World Debt Relief Plans Reviewed
BK2303124889 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 16 Mar 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Brady Does Better But... "]

[Text] The U.S. wants to help Third World countries groaning under a total external debt of over 1.200 billion dollars without hurting its banks which lend large sums of their surplus funds to them hastily, and without lending sizeable funds of its own. This is why the much publicised Baker plan of 1985—which sought economic growth in developing countries through substantial lending by commercial banks—made little headway. The new treasury secretary Nicholas Brady has come up with an improved debt relief plan which relies heavily on the funds of the World Bank and the IMF to reduce the debt, which in the case of Latin America alone is 401 billion dollars.

The most notable feature of the plan is the American endorsement for a move to reduce debt—a departure from Washington's previous stance. Brady's proposal has been welcomed by many developing states as well as Japan, which has also promised to help. Clearly most debtor nations will not be able to repay unless a part of their debt is written off, interest payments are waived substantially or repayments are rescheduled—or a package of all the three elements is put together. So Brady's plan would make available pools of money from the World Bank and the IMF to reduce the debt and guarantee interest payments, but they will be available to only those countries which re-structure their economies as prescribed by the IMF, and negotiations between the debtor countries and the lending banks would be voluntary and on a case-by-case basis. The pools of money are to be used to collateralise debt-for-bond exchanges, which would result in significant reduction of debt.

Mr. Brady's is a statement of principle or a proposal with only broad outlines. The specifics, like how much will be available through the World Bank and IMF, how tough conditionalities will be for indebted countries qualifying for the relief, and what will be the rate of interest on the new lending or bonds, etc., remain to be settled.

A group of eight Latin American Governments meeting in Venezuela, where recent riots were sparked by tough IMF sponsored measures have welcomed the U.S. initiative. But they say they will press for their own plan for relief. They want debt reduction without conditions attached, as well as new financing that is not what the U.S. or the West are prepared to agree to. They are still firm on imposing their own terms which many debtor countries find unacceptable. It is unlikely that the impasse will be overcome by the new Brady proposal.

Sri Lanka

Cuban Official Arrives for 3-Day Visit
BK2103133589 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1242 GMT 21 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 21 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Ernesto Melendez Bachs, minister/president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation of Cuba, is on a three day visit as a guest of the minister of foreign affairs. He paid a call on Mr. Wijeratne at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this morning which was followed by official talks.

A press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs further states the two ministers had wide ranging discussions on bilateral relations and reviewed the benefits accruing to the two countries from their cooperation in the scientific and technical fields. Foreign Minister Wijeratne thanked the Cuban minister for the positive contribution Cuba was making in various fields of our development activities.

A protocol identifying areas of further cooperation between Sri Lanka and Cuba for the two years, 1989 and 1990, will be signed by the two ministers at the conclusion of the visit.

During his stay Mr. Bachs will call on the prime minister, minister of labour, minister of fisheries and aquatic resources, minister of youth affairs and sports, minister of lands, irrigation and Mahaweli development, minister of higher education, minister of plantation industries and the minister of health with a view to increasing exchanges between Sri Lanka and Cuba under the scientific and technical cooperation agreement signed by the two parties in 1978.

In his talks with the minister, he will review the progress of the Cuban scholarship scheme under which a number of Sri Lankan students are following under-graduate studies in various fields in Cuba.

Wijeratne Says JVP Militants Seek 'Surrender'
BK2303045489 Hong Kong AFP in English 0445 GMT 23 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 23 (AFP)—Sinhalese militants are keen to surrender in the face of stepped up military pressure and the Sri Lankan Government is willing to

accept them, Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said Wednesday. A plan for activists of the Sinhalese Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP, or People's Liberation Front) to surrender will be announced "in a few days" after President Ranasinghe Premadasa approved it, Mr. Wijeratne said.

Mr. Wijeratne, who is also the junior defence minister, told reporters here late Wednesday after the weekly cabinet meeting that many JVP activists were keen to surrender, but were being threatened by their leadership.

"The pressure is on them (the JVP) and we are closing in on them. They are desperate. We have to get rid of the subversives one day or the other and sooner the better," Mr. Wijeratne said. He said 60 people were killed on Tuesday, a Buddhist holiday and full moon day, and most of the victims were ruling United National Party (UNP) activists and security forces. "The moon must be affecting these fellows. Only mad people do this type of things (killings)," Mr. Wijeratne said. Official figures show that 75 people were killed on Sunday and Monday in an upsurge of violence involving JVP activists. A vigilante group claimed the killings of 17 suspected JVP men on Monday.

Mr. Wijeratne did not say if surrender would be conditional or whether it would apply to Tamil militants fighting Indian troops in the island's Tamil-populated northern and eastern regions. "We are prepared to accept surrender. But forces and police will continue their operations because they are the law enforcing authority. No wrong signals will be given. We have not decided on an amnesty," he said. The minister read out a letter he said had been written by an individual asking the government to give an opportunity to surrender to thousands of young men who had been misled by the JVP leadership.

Mr. Wijeratne said 10 rebel suspects had surrendered to security forces in northcentral Anuradhapura District in the past week and more were expected. "Before I make an announcement (of surrender) I must have the wherewithal to accommodate these people, to protect them and rehabilitate them. They have been living in the jungles. Surely they can wait for a few more days," he added. He said troops and police will be given extra powers to deal with subversives as normal legislation was inadequate. He did not elaborate.

The minister's remarks came hours after the JVP had successfully staged a one-day strike, crippling most essential services in the island's Sinhalese majority areas. The JVP said in leaflets that the action was to protest killing by local and Indian forces. Mr. Wijeratne conceded that transport was affected and shops were closed as a result of the work stoppage. "Traders will soon have to join together and act against subversives," the minister said.

The JVP is violently opposed to the government and a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord under which New Delhi has some 45,000 to 50,000 troops in the island's northern and eastern regions. The dominant Tamil separatist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), is waging a bush war against Indian troops after refusing to surrender arms in line with the peace pact which sought to end a bloody Tamil separatist war.

'Vigilante' Group Blamed for Deaths of 4 Rebels

BK2403102089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1012 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 24 (AFP)—The military on Friday blamed the deaths of four suspected Sinhalese militants on a vigilante group, a day after the government bowed to an opposition demand to investigate alleged police involvement in a similar incident on Monday. Military officials said the four dead rebels, killed in southern Sri Lanka, belonged to the Deshapremi Janata Viyaparaya (DJV, or Patriotic People's Front), the military wing of the extremist Janata Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP, or People's Liberation Front). The victims were found Thursday morning in and around the town of Monaragala. "They had been stabbed and then shot" by an anti-rebel group, one official said. The four rebels were among at least nine persons killed in continuing violence on the island in the last 36 hours.

Two other rebels were killed Wednesday night in a gun battle with the Army at Galagamuwa in northwestern Kurunegala District, the officials said. They said the battle followed an ambush by a rebel patrol in which one soldier was wounded. Military officials also said 18 rebels were captured during a combined Army and Navy swoop in western Kalutara District Thursday.

Suspected JVP activists stormed a policeman's house Wednesday at Eppawala in north central Anuradhapura District and shot dead his wife and two brothers-in-law. The guerrillas then set fire to the house with the bodies inside, the officials said. The attack on the policeman's house was believed to be in retaliation for the killing of 17 suspected rebels in the area on Monday after three policemen died in a land mine blast set off by the rebels. The police blamed the deaths of the 17 guerrillas on a vigilante group called "Black Cats," but residents alleged that the killings were the work of the police.

The government agreed on Thursday to an independent investigation of the incident in response to a demand by the opposition leader in the national Parliament. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, a former prime minister, demanded in Parliament that an independent team of police officers be sent from Colombo to probe what she called the killings of "17 civilians" in Eppawala.

Mrs. Bandaranaike, quoting reports received by her office, said that some of the murdered youths had been in police custody before their bodies were found by the roadside. She said a senior police official in the area had been quoted in the press as having said that some of those killed were "hard-core rebels."

"What inference can one draw from such a statement? Are they trying to tell us that while the police were incompetent in not being able to crack down on the so-called rebels, a mysterious unknown armed gang is doing the job of the police?" Mrs. Bandaranaike asked. She said the people had a right to know who the "Black Cats" were and what action had been taken to provide security to civilians of the area against attacks by "unidentified armed gangs."

Ranjan Wijeratne, the foreign minister and junior defence minister, replied that the government would send a special police team to investigate the Eppawela killings. He said the government would protect police officers carrying out their duties, but would not allow them to take advantage of their uniforms. "I give them my fullest support to ensure that the subversives are banished completely. Everyone should cooperate to contain the subversives," the minister said. He said there were killings not only at Eppawela but all over the country. The opposition leader is concerned over the killing of civilians. I hope she shows the same concern and also talks on behalf of the unfortunate members of the UNP (ruling United National Party) who are being killed."

The JVP, which is violently opposed to the government, has been accused of killing more than 2,300 security personnel and political rivals, mainly of them members of the ruling party, in the past 18 months.

Tamil Tigers Allege New Indian Offensive

BK2403105089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1037 GMT 24 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 24 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's leading Tamil separatist group has said that Indian troops killed more than 300 civilians in a renewed offensive against its positions in the northeast of the island. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in a statement released here Thursday, also said that 20 Indian soldiers were killed and 50 wounded in the operation, in which the LTTE lost six fighters. It said 30,000 troops, backed by artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships, were involved in the operation, which resumed Monday after a week-long lull, in the Nithikaikulam area of Mullaitivu District.

A spokeswoman for the Indian High Commission (Embassy) here said she had no information about such an operation. Sri Lankan military officials were also unaware of the operation. "Nothing has been reported to us," a senior official said. The LTTE statement spoke of "fierce battles" on several fronts and heavy bombardment of civilian areas. "Thousands of panic-stricken villagers have fled the area and taken refuge in the (neighbouring) villages of Alampil and Thannerootru. Hundreds of houses and huts have been destroyed by bombs and shells," it alleged.

The Indian troops, deployed in the island's north and east under a July 1987 ethnic peace pact signed by Colombo and New Delhi, had launched a major operation against LTTE positions in the same district early this month. Indian officials had said that the troops destroyed three LTTE camps and killed about 70 rebels in the operation, in which 13 soldiers also died and dozens were wounded. The LTTE has repudiated the peace pact and has been waging a bloody bush war against the estimated 45,000 to 50,000 Indian troops.

Indian Forces Kill 6 'Terrorists' in North

BK2103131589 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1235 GMT 21 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 21 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Six hardcore northern terrorists were shot dead by the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force] in Jaffna during the last 48 hours. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that three automatic weapons had also been recovered by Indian troops. The sources said that three terrorists were shot dead by Indian troops in an operation at Pulloly, West Jaffna, yesterday, while three terrorists were shot dead by IPKF in Jaffna Monday [20 March]. A claymore mine, a detonator, a cyanide capsule, ammunition and a battery pack were also seized.

6 'Subversives' Killed, 18 Rounded Up

BK2403120589 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1134 GMT 24 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 24 Mar (LANKAPUVATH)—Six subversives were killed in incidents reported during the last 48 hours. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that two subversives were shot dead by security forces and a soldier wounded in an exchange of fire Wednesday following a gang of subversives having ambushed a security forces patrol at Moragollagama, Galgamuwa, in the Kurunegala District of Sri Lanka's North Western Province. The other subversives fled.

Security forces recovered a broken shot gun, along with the bodies of the two dead subversives. A soldier who was wounded in the attack was admitted to hospital. Official sources said that the bodies of four suspected subversives who had been hacked and shot dead by an anti-subversive group were found at Weheragala in the Moneragala District.

Eighteen persons suspected of being involved in subversive activities were taken in for questioning yesterday in a combined operation by the Army and Navy and handed over to the police for investigation at Weheragala in the Uva Province District of Moneragala. Three persons were shot dead by unidentified gunmen at Danwelodaya and Medabedda in the Moneragala District.

Meanwhile, reports from the Eastern Province state that during a search operation the Indian Peacekeeping Force [IPKF] found the body of 21-year-old, Jayandan, at Waramantivu, Batticaloa yesterday. Indian troops also found the body of 17-year-old, W. Devam, in a paddy field at Kurunchmunakulam, Batticaloa. The body of Sathy (30-years) was also discovered during an IPKF search operation at Thalladi in Akkaraipattu in the east.